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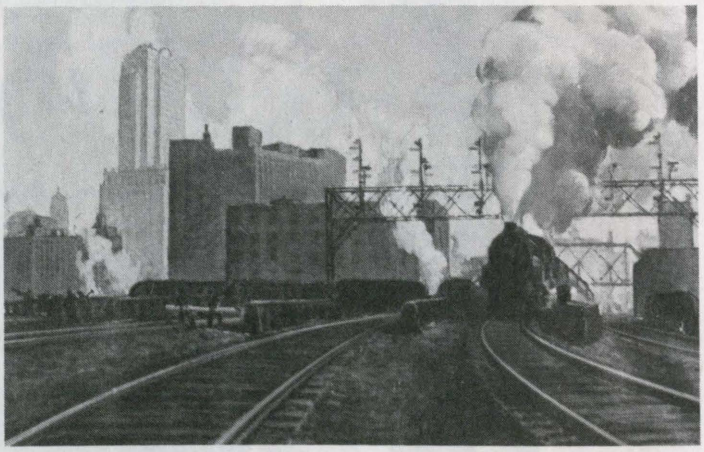

Richard A. Chase (American, b. 1891), *Opera and Steel* (*A 400 Pulls Out*), oil on canvas, 25-3/16" x 40-1/8". Valparaiso University Art Collection, Percy Sloan Bequest.

Cover: Richard A. Chase (American, b. 1891), *Tough Stuff*, oil on board, 36" x 28-1/16". Valparaiso University Art Collection, Percy Sloan Bequest. Photo by Jack Hiller and Alexa Venturini.

Probably painted in the late twenties, these scenes celebrate industrial constructions in Chicago's Loop.

RHWB

Comment on Contemporary Affairs by the Editor

Democracy and the Supreme Court

The lady's for the judgin' but we're still not that clear as to what the judgin's all about.

The mini-controversy surrounding the appointment of Sandra Day O'Connor as Justice of the Supreme Court told us a few things about current American politics and culture, but it did little to instruct us on the larger—and we think crucial—issue of the role of the Supreme Court in the American political process.

The Senate's 99-0 confirmation in late September of Judge O'Connor suggested that while the fact of her sex was notable in her selection, it was hardly controversial. If there are any in America who think it inappropriate for a woman to sit on the Supreme Court, they were conspicuous by their silence. Even the more debated issue of Judge O'Connor's views on abortion failed to stem the wave of near-unanimous enthusiasm for her appointment. The episode indicated the inability of anti-abortion people to transmit their consuming preoccupation to the larger electorate, and it revealed more generally the utter folly of trying to launch a political offensive against Ronald Reagan from the Right. One wonders if Richard Viguerie and his friends on the New Right learned anything from their failure.

What is unfortunate is that the country came out of the dispute (such as it was) no better informed on the role of the Court than it was when it went in. President Reagan reported himself satisfied that Judge O'Connor respected the difference between interpreting the law and making it, a point the Judge confirmed in the Senate hearings on her confirmation. Both the President and his appointee thus indicated their support for the concept of judicial restraint, but given the overwhelming concern with the Judge's sex and with her views on abortion the matter of her attitude toward the role of the judiciary received only fleeting attention.

Most Americans vaguely apprehend that the Supreme Court's power of judicial review—the right to rule on the constitutionality of the actions of the legislative and executive branches—constitutes an anomaly in the political system. America is a democracy, and in democracies the majority rules, yet nine unelected judges, answerable to no one, regularly exercise the power to invalidate the actions of the nation's elected representatives, actions that presumably reflect the majority's will. That follows, of course, from a system of government based on a written constitution that carefully defines and restricts the powers of government. It falls to the courts, pre-eminently the Supreme Court, to see to it that those definitions and restrictions are adhered to.

Virtually all Americans today accept the legitimacy of the Court's review powers (though historically that has not always been the case), but it remains that those powers, however necessary, run counter to normal democratic assumptions, so most Americans (and most judges) traditionally have felt that judicial review should be exercised with caution and restraint. The prevailing view has been that the system of review should operate on the presumption of the legitimacy of what the political process produces, that legislatures should be given the benefit of the doubt when fine questions of constitutional right arise, and that the courts should act to overrule executive or legislative actions only in the case of clear violations of constitutional prescriptions.

According to the doctrine of judicial restraint, judges are not to concern themselves with the wisdom, practicality, or even morality of the matters that come before them for review; the only allowable consideration is constitutionality. The Supreme Court, under this view, should never presume to set itself up as a third branch of the legislature—particularly since the only "veto" over its actions involves the cumbersome process of constitutional amendment—and judges are enjoined to separate as scrupulously as they can their policy preferences from their judicial interpretations. If the people, through their elected representatives, choose to do foolish or reprehensible things, that is their democratic right, and it is not properly within the province of the Court to establish itself as a body of moral or political overseers of the public good.

The problem with judicial restraint—a construct to which we are fervently committed—is that it is a doc-

Ideological preferences aside, there can be little doubt that the judiciary, led by the Supreme Court, now plays a more intrusive role in American public life than it ever has before.

trine easier to lay out in theory than to apply in practice. Its defenders often assume that the process of constitutional interpretation is simpler than it is. It would be convenient if, as proponents of the theory sometimes suppose, judges could simply take the law or action brought before them for review, compare it with the relevant text of the Constitution and with the expressed intent of the Constitution's writers and amenders, and then rule authoritatively as to the fit between the contested law and the Constitution's requirements.

But the Constitution is a brief, general, and non-inclusive document, and the discussions concerning it of the Founders, or of the Congresses that amended it, are often frustratingly ambiguous as to what was intended in any particular provision. In any case, as an eighteenth-century document, the Constitution could not conceivably have anticipated the issues and problems—and the constitutional disputes arising from them—of 200 years of subsequent development. Conditions change, unforeseen situations arise, and an element of creative extrapolation and elaboration necessarily enters into the process of constitutional interpretation. No literalist understanding of the practice of judicial review can hold up under careful scrutiny. Indeed, the power of judicial review itself can be found in no explicit provision of the Constitution, and scholars have long debated whether or not it was intended by the Founders. It developed, as has so much of constitutional law, through evolutionary usage.

Even as constitutional texts cannot be expected to be self-interpreting or to address themselves to all imaginable situations, so also, as the legal realists have long insisted, can judges not be expected to achieve pure dispassionate objectivity in their interpretive functions. Judges are like the rest of us, and their political and social values inevitably get tangled up in their judicial opinions, particularly since the review process involves an irreducible element of subjective judgment. It is time, the legal realists argue, that we demystify the Court's operations and face openly the extra-legal factors that enter into judicial decisions. Recognition of judicial discretion, they insist, is not heresy but simple acknowledgment of reality.

Some legal scholars have made a virtue of the realists' necessity. They want the Court to be openly activist, without excessive scruple or restrictive humility as to its role. They see it as upholder of the national conscience, free from political pressure and thus free to express and further fundamental national values. Some such observers, for example, emphasize the Court's unique opportunity to protect minority rights and interests and to set itself against the majoritarian pressures that, in their view, it is the Constitution's highest duty to withstand. There exist a number of variations on this theme of the Court as expositor of national virtue and redressor of social wrongs.

In recent years, arguments for judicial activism have most often come from the political Left, but there is no particular ideological logic to the concept. Until the post-World War II period, in fact, activism expressed itself more often in defense of conservative values than of liberal ones. In the late nineteenth century and again during the New Deal, the Supreme Court regularly struck down national and state laws that it found in violation of basic property rights. During those years, it was liberals, not conservatives, who became exercised over judges reading their personal values into the Constitution and who celebrated the virtues of judicial restraint.

The career of Justice Felix Frankfurter illustrates the ideological vagaries that often attend attitudes toward judicial review. During the New Deal, Frankfurter was applauded by liberals and scorned by conservatives for his insistence that the Court, in striking down much of Franklin Roosevelt's liberal program, was improperly involving itself in political questions. Twenty years later, he found his situation reversed: conservatives approved and liberals questioned his reservations concerning the now-liberal activism of the Warren Court. Frankfurter's defense of judicial restraint had remained constant, and his constancy could not be made sense of by those whose judicial attitudes were simply a reflex of their political preferences.

Ideological preferences aside, there can be little doubt that the judiciary, led by the Supreme Court, now plays a more intrusive role in American public life than it ever has before, and that has become a matter of considerable concern, not just among the crazies on the political fringes who wanted to impeach (if not hang) Earl Warren, but among serious legal scholars, such as the late Alexander Bickel. One can think of a whole range of questions, including church-state relations, abortion, political representation, and racial integration (as opposed to simple desegregation), where the courts have read into the Constitution requirements and prohibitions that less imaginative observers do not find there. A professor of law recently characterized the Supreme Court's decisions relating to the right to privacy and to abortion as "judicial law created by whimsy."

It is reported that Earl Warren's tendency was to ask of a judicial matter before him not, "What is the law?", but rather, "What is right?". Most reasonable people agree that the Warren Court made some great and necessary decisions, but the habit of mind attributed to Warren should concern anyone who believes in the democratic process and who therefore rejects the notion of the Court as a free-floating national conscience. It is

not the task of the Court to be the instrument of our better selves; it is simply to hold us to the law. Benign usurpation is still usurpation. Justices are not philosopher-kings, and even if they were, there is no place for philosopher-kings in democratic politics.

If the literalist version of judicial restraint is an illusion, the general concept remains useful and even necessary in characterizing the predisposition judges should bring to their tasks of constitutional interpretation. Some rigorous form of self-limitation on the part of the courts remains necessary if we are to maintain our constitutional balance. Constitutional democracy must never come to be understood as rule by the judicial branch, and if Thomas Jefferson was wrong to identify John Marshall as a threat to American democracy, he was not wrong to warn us in general against a runaway judiciary. We hope that Justice O'Connor turns out to be as sensible and cautious on the bench as she appeared to be in her confirmation hearings. If she does, and thereby reinforces the more restrained impulses the Court has displayed in the last few years, our politics and our Constitution will be the healthier for it.

The Dilemmas of Political Choice

Politics as a moral enterprise is never entirely satisfactory.

That has to do not only with the human limitations we are all familiar with, but with the nature of political activity. In politics we seek not one specific good but a whole range of them (assuming that the common good is the sum of a great many particular goods), and the problem is that those goods are not always consistent with each other. We know that politics is choice, but we tend to forget that the choice is less between good and evil than between competing goods. In pursuing any one good, we often have to sacrifice other goods to it, which is why political choice, seriously considered, is such an agonizing business.

This obvious but easily-obscured truth came to mind recently as we read an editorial in the *New Republic* honoring the memory of Roger Baldwin, perhaps the most notable American champion of civil liberties in this century. The *New Republic* praised Baldwin's lifelong commitment to "the goal of a society with a minimum of compulsion, a maximum of individual freedom and of voluntary association, and the abolition of exploitation and poverty." For the *New Republic,* Baldwin's goal (the formulation was his) made up "as good a summary of the liberal and democratic creed . . . as anyone has ever offered." That may well be, but Baldwin's credo also reveals the dilemmas of his version of liberal democracy.

Baldwin wants to maximize freedom (avoid compulsion and encourage individualism and voluntary association) at the same time that he is committed to certain substantive goals (abolition of poverty and exploitation) the achievement of which will almost certainly require extensive elements of coercion and of collective restraint on individual free choice. If we assume, as observation and common sense would lead us to, that a free society is in fundamental respects an unequal one, then we have identified the latent contradiction in Baldwin's creed.

Given any significant degree of difference in innate human abilities, then free and equal opportunity will lead to unequal results, even if the rules of the game are entirely free of discrimination or of unfair advantage. We might in theory be able to devise a way of abolishing poverty without excessive coercion (assuming we define poverty in absolute terms and not as relative deprivation), but since exploitation in contemporary usage is normally understood to arise out of relationships characterized by large disparities in power and wealth, then its abolition would seem to require that considerable degree of compulsion necessary to do away with substantial inequalities among persons. Freedom and equality, in other words, are not simply differing ends of liberal democracy; they are in significant respects contradictory ones.

The list of mutually contradictory ends of a liberal society could be expanded indefinitely. We want a society that is humane and generous toward those in need; yet we also want a citizenry of self-sufficient men and women who have not developed the habits of depend-

Social collectivities, like individuals, need to think well of themselves, and they are better able to do that when their choices between competing goods can be made with the lowest visible costs.

ency that welfare can create. We need to protect our natural environment from industrial pollution, but we also need an industrial sector whose externally-imposed costs of production do not threaten our pursuit of full employment. We want to encourage and celebrate genuine pluralism, but we at the same time want a society with enough sense of common purpose and identity that it can accomplish common tasks. We hope to encourage freedom of expression and to avoid censorship, but we wonder, as we pass through Times Square, if unfettered freedom of expression is compatible with respect for human dignity.

In politics as we experience it rather than as we think about it, these tensions and contradictions are resolved through an informal and largely unconscious process of trade-offs and compromises. We trade so much freedom for so much equality, some pluralism for some unity. Politics becomes not a systematic pursuit of a comprehensive good, but a never-ending process of balancing and rebalancing of social forces and social ends. In our utopian moments, we dream of achieving, in final and perfect equilibrium, the Good Society, but the requirements of realism call us back to our proximate and always unfinished struggle for the socially tolerable.

Societies function best during those periods when the moral incompleteness of their politics intrudes least sharply on their consciousness. Social collectivities, like individuals, need to think well of themselves, and they are better able to do that when their choices between competing goods can be made with the lowest visible costs.

The problem for Americans today is that our economic difficulties are so intense that we may have to make choices between competing goods that will involve more social pain than we are accustomed to enduring. We are appalled at the prospect either of sacrificing welfare benefits to economic growth or of maintaining social entitlements only at the cost of ruinous inflation. Yet those prospects seem to be upon us, and our moral and political uneasiness increases accordingly.

America has not faced such adverse conditions since the Great Depression. From World War II until the recent past, American prosperity and social comity had seemed to be guaranteed by the Keynesian consensus. Keynesian political economy appeared to offer the optimum combination of social goods. It promised economic growth within a framework of social responsibility, substantial economic security without an oppressive structure of bureaucratic control.

Private ownership and public purpose could be combined in a system that seemed to steer perfectly between the opposite evils of unregulated capitalism and state socialism. Through counter-cyclical activity focused on the management of demand, the theory promised, government could ensure growth and prosperity, moderate the waves in the business cycle, and in general fine-tune an economy that remained essentially capitalist in structure but which provided ample room for provision by society of generous public goods and services. Keynesianism did not quite promise all good things all at once, but it came as close to that state of social perfection as political and economic reality seemed to allow.

In recent years, however, for reasons that economists cannot seem to agree on, the Keynesian model has ceased to work. We experience what the model promised us should never happen: simultaneous inflation and stagnation. The Phillips' curve operated on the assumption of a trade-off between rates of unemployment and inflation, yet instead of trading off against each other they seem sometimes to be mutually reinforcing. From all good things all at once we have descended to a condition where everything threatens always to turn out badly.

So now we have to make choices between competing goods that are more distinct than we are accustomed to. The victory of Ronald Reagan last November seemed to signal—at least to the victors—a desire on the part of Americans that these hard choices be confronted, that the collapse of the Keynesian consensus be acknowledged, and that we do what is necessary to regain overall economic vitality, even if that should require weakening of the structure of social benefits.

Reagan's is the most ideological administration to hit Washington since the New Deal, and moments of ideological confrontation raise our consciousness of social choices beyond the normal level. Those whose preferred social goods are being sacrificed to the attainment of other goods sound moral alarms, and our politics becomes more of a battlefield than is customarily the case.

What makes our choices the more perplexing is that we cannot calculate with any precision the costs they entail. It is one thing to choose one good over another when we can be sure of what we will gain and what we will lose, but the political economy operates in the realm of art rather than science, and so all we can make are rough guesses. We cannot even know after the fact whether our choices were the right ones since we have no way of measuring what would have been the outcomes of alternate choices.

Whatever we choose, and however our choices turn out, we are more likely in the end to be aware of the pain we have experienced (and inflicted) by the goods we sacrificed than of the benefits we gained (and conferred) by the goods we embraced. That is the tragedy of political choice, and whatever moral freight we attach to our political commitments, we should never forget that, in some senses, all the choices we make are bad ones.

Thinking About Ecology

Resource Management, Recognition of Rights, and Phenomenological Truth

Richard Stith

Awareness of man's destructive impact on nature has increased in recent years. Hardly a day passes but that newspapers report some major or minor ecological disruption. Such increased awareness, of course, makes us worry more; but it no doubt is also experienced as a reason for hope. "At least people are beginning to realize the damage they are doing to nature and are trying to minimize it," may be our thought.

However, it is my contention that our response to the ecological crisis may actually make it worse. That is, concern for the destruction of nature may lead us to an even more global and permanent elimination of nature, both in a physical and in a metaphysical sense. Somewhat like the American military, which (it is said) sought to save Vietnamese villages by destroying them, we may end up annihilating nature in the course of protecting it.

Such a result need not occur. There is another response to the ecological crisis which is less dangerous, though also less likely. And there is a third kind of answer which seems perhaps the least likely of all, but which if realized would lead to genuine respect for nature. In this essay, after first describing our ecological crisis in a bit more depth, I shall examine these three alternatives, which I call "Resource Management," "Recognition of Rights," and "Phenomenological Truth."

Pictured superficially, the ecological crisis involves the over-consumption or over-pollution of various aspects of our natural environment, such that this environment is becoming permanently lost or "used up." In ecological terms, we are disrupting natural systemic equilibria to the point of permanent destabilization, or restabilization at undesirable points. For example, we may cut down so many trees that sun and erosion turn the land into a desert in which no future trees could ever grow. Or we may so pollute a body of water that organic and inorganic decomposition is overtaxed and the balance of life becomes unhinged. In short, the environment is subjected to such extensive disruptive human intervention that it becomes useless or harmful to man.

Reducing Nature to a Human Resource

This physical destruction of nature has been accompanied by the metaphysical or ideological elimination of nature from our thought as a being or kind of being having its own goodness and its own structure. As we all know, our ancient worlds attributed to nature variously divinity (pantheism), personality (animism), or at least intelligible essences defining the good for each being (Aristotelianism). Christianity, too, could point to divine approval of nature prior to the consideration of human needs (the Biblical account of Genesis), to the mandate of stewardship, and to the Pauline idea that all creation is to be redeemed. By contrast, modernity is marked by the reduction of nature to a mere resource for human consumption, not only in practice but also in theory: Much modern epistemology insists that nature cannot even be known except as an instrument in the service of human interests.

This total reductionism must not be mistaken for mere human selfishness. Men have no doubt always desired to appropriate natural goods for themselves. What is new is the denial that there are any natural goods. The only good has become for us the human experience of the satisfaction of desire, valued either for its own sake (utilitarianism) or because of the rule that we must universalize our own self-interest (contractualism). Obedient to these ideologies, science has become for us not a path to truth but a set of models useful for prediction of experience, and thus the scout and pathfinder for the technological army of total conquest and control of what was once nature.

Phenomenologically, all nature has become for us, in so far as we think as modern men, like an aspirin tablet. An aspirin tablet is of interest to me not because it is

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The casual legalization of abortion in many countries has shown the ease with which even living human beings can be stripped of all rights and reduced to a mere resource for private consumption.

good, much less because it is divine, but only because it makes me *feel* good. Our world is like a great stockpile of actual or potential tablets, capable eventually (we hope) of producing every enjoyable experience we might ever wish. What else *could* we do with such a world except exploit it?

The Self as Consuming Mouth

Like the physical destruction of nature, this metaphysical destruction harms man. As nature becomes only a resource to be consumed, the self becomes only a consuming mouth. Even more, the eyes above the mouth have twisted inward, as we seek to look only at our own satisfaction rather than at our "food." Our mind or ego thus becomes (in our thought) external to our self, which in turn becomes like some kind of pet animal we feed but do not expect to do anything.

With such a relationship to the self and to nature, our view of others must also be quite limited. We must be cynical, and thus disrespectful, about all claims to idealism and self-sacrifice for the sake of some good other than human satisfaction. And even this one remaining good cannot unite us in communal solidarity because it is always ultimately an individual rather than a group goal (at least under contractualism). Moreover, the physical bodies of other persons, as well as our own, are simply parts of nature and thus mere resources to be used by us. The bodies of the small selves we are feeding may also become pet food. For example, biological manipulation may be able to alter any and all human needs and desires. Or, again, the casual legalization of abortion in many countries has shown the ease with which even living human beings can be stripped of all rights and reduced to a mere resource for private consumption.

The most common response to the exhaustion and over-pollution of our natural resources is what I shall call "resource management." The thought here is that man is in trouble because he has been too short-sighted in his exploitation of nature. He has used up nature because he has failed to plan *for nature* as well as for his immediate needs. In other words, he has continued to treat nature as a *given* rather than as something which must be made and remade by man. Man has endangered his own survival by assuming too little control over nature. Indeed, only when man has achieved *total* control —when every tree is planted and counted and every water content is measured and balanced—will he be safe. Only then can he ensure that natural equilibria will remain at exactly the levels most useful to him. For today nature still threatens us with retaliation for her rape; in her very violated and dying being she arouses in us a kind of numinous fear and guilt. But once our control is total we can forget such silly worries and settle down to use her in a business-like way.

Resource management thus makes the entire world a stockpile for the artificial production of enjoyment. It is the final and complete physical duplication of the metaphysical elimination of the natural as a category of being. Just as our concepts reflect only our interests, so too will our environment reflect only the interests of man. Only useful trees, for example, will be permitted to grow. The rain will fall only when and where it is needed. And once the whole earth is experienced as safe and artificial, the intuitive basis for remembering or even understanding the older conceptions of nature will be gone. "Formerly, all the world was mad," we will say with Nietzsche's "last men." Nor is resource-management without its impact on our view of others. The population control mentality is the counterpart to this attitude to nature. Except for rich individuals and nations, who are somehow felt to have private resources, adults are thought of suspiciously as breeders, and their children become a resource-consuming enemy. Or, if this is too strong, children become mere objects to be "wanted" or "unwanted" according to their usefulness, numbers, or handicaps.

But cannot we take into account these losses and provide for them? For example, cannot we retain "nature preserves" where even useless trees may grow, so that future generations can still enjoy nature in its ancient glory? Heidegger's poignant text "Die Frage nach der Technik" makes clear that this is impossible. After contrasting the Rhine river as it was formerly known to poets and painters with modern use of it for hydroelectric power, he turns to those portions of the river which have been allowed to remain unspoiled. Even these, he says, are viewed simply as stockpiled resources, for, say, a growing tourist industry—as "aspirin tablets" in the terms used in this essay.

And the sad fact is that this conversion of the earth into a man-made spaceship (a metaphor in frequent use today) may herald ultimate physical as well as metaphysical disaster. For what if we miscalculate? What if we find that some types of useless trees had an irreplaceable use after all? What if new human or animal needs arise, or what if we discover that we did not fully know the old needs? Because we now control the whole world, such errors will be irremediable in a way which was not the case when at least a part of nature was autonomous.

Of course, we may try to provide for these contingencies by using our "nature preserves" as artificial wildernesses and buffers against disaster, as well as for tourist purposes. But our desire for maximum present enjoyment, according to changing fashions and tastes, will always make us minimize all unforeseen problems.

We cannot honestly believe in the rightful autonomy of nature simply because this suits human convenience. We must have good reasons, other than our convenience, for respecting nature.

For example, once paternal authority is no longer perceived to be natural, how likely is it to be preserved (in the face of demands for the liberation of women and children) simply because it *might* have some unknown essential function in the promotion of human happiness?

The dilemma here is that we cannot raise ourselves by our own bootstraps. We cannot artificially make the non-artificial. We cannot generate a divine authority to limit us simply because it would be useful to us to be limited. To do so would be the rawest pretense, and the "authority" would be disregarded whenever it became inconvenient.

The resource-management response to excessive human intervention in the natural environment is to call for increased, indeed total, intervention and control. The obvious second kind of response is to retreat rather than to advance, to grant nature increased independence and autonomy from man. But we have just seen that this second approach is not available merely for the asking. We cannot honestly believe in the rightful autonomy of nature simply because this suits human convenience. We must have good reasons, *other than* our convenience, for respecting nature.

One major reason which has been brought forward frequently is that natural entities, particularly animals, have "rights." This approach draws upon the utilitarian and contractualist traditions mentioned above, and in effect moves such animals into the "subject" from the "object" categories, so that the satisfaction of animal desires becomes a moral and legal consideration quite apart from the animals' resource value for human beings.

Yet it is questionable whether the human rights traditions can be an adequate vehicle for the protection of nature. For example, one of the main concerns of naturalists seems to be the preservation of animal *species.* But it is surely only with great difficulty that the "rights" idea—with its focus on *individual* happiness, freedom, and equality—can be adapted to species protection. Again, how can individualistic rights ideas lead us to care for those parts of nature which can hardly even be *thought* of as "individuals"—i.e., inanimate nature. Despite the poetic hopes of the late Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, who thought that trees and lakes should be given rights, such an extension appears conceptually impossible (except perhaps as a very odd legal fiction) and not to be seriously urged even by the strongest defenders of "animal rights."

Moreover, the idea of animal rights is being proposed precisely at the same time that human rights are being restricted to those of us who have achieved some prescribed high "quality of life," which quality includes at least self-consciousness. Those not yet self-conscious (e.g., the unborn or, increasingly, the newly born) or no longer self-conscious (e.g., the seriously injured or otherwise mentally handicapped) are being denied basic human rights with the argument that they are "non-persons." Thus even if all of nature were treated exactly as we are coming to treat each other, most of nature would not be sufficiently conscious to qualify for basic rights.

Yet let us suppose that some measure of individual animal rights do become accepted. Nothing fundamental has changed. The world is still divided into isolated consuming subjects and amorphous resource objects. The only difference is that some non-human entities are now considered consumers as well as resources. All the rest of nature remains nothing more than an "aspirin tablet." And even the humans and animals who do obtain rights also remain physically part of this exploitable natural world, so that their bodies remain resources to be manipulated for the sake of satisfaction (provided the exploitation is utilitarian and/or contractually permitted).

From Rights to Phenomenological Truth

All the objectionable consequences of living in this purely resource world thus remain. Some animals are simply admitted to our mutual self-interest society; in no way are we closer to respect for, or community with, nature.

There is, or was in the 1960s, yet a third response to the ecological crisis, another reason for not taking control of nature. Hippies and the counterculture in the West seemed to be articulating a new relationship to nature in which nature was "grooved on" or otherwise discovered to have inherent worth of its own, quite apart from human interests or a utilitarian-contractarian calculus. Of course, these perceptions of nature were aided often by drugs. But does this mean that they are of no significance? Could it not be that these perceptions were but clarifications of vague forms always present before us, but which in our daily busy business we ignore?

I want here to suggest that this is so. We in fact do not and never have viewed nature entirely as a resource. Rather, our interests, and the theories we articulate to justify these interests, only make us *think* that we perceive nature purely as an exploitable object. All we have to do is to find a way again to overcome this gap between thought and being, to make our thought conform to our actual lived experience of the world (i.e., to make it "phenomenologically true").

Only a very small part of my world is made up of "aspirin tablets." For example, I do not care for my chil-

dren because they make me "feel good," i.e., bring me satisfaction, but because I love them. I perceive them to have a dignity quite apart from their usefulness to me or any contractual "good deal" I might hypothetically have made with them. There are also other ways, besides love, in which the object of my concern presents itself to me as other than a resource for my satisfaction—for example, "respect" or "reverence." I may feel respect for, say, a mighty tree; or I may find myself awe-struck before some delicate natural beauty. Here again my self is submerged in an objective good beyond itself. Natural science itself, insofar as it remains a search for truth rather than only for prediction, involves a care for natural being which culminates in contemplation rather than exploitation.

Even those parts of nature which we desire to possess are not necessarily desired because they make us feel good. For example, when someone plants a flower garden, is he not in some way honoring the flowers? Would he not say that flowers are wonder-full, rather than that they are useful stimuli which happen to produce a pleasurable experience in him? Even if he also grows plants to pick and eat, is he doing so only because they produce satisfaction, or because they are good? When we are hungry, do we desire a meal?—or do we desire only the satisfied feeling which comes after eating? The answer is clear. We desire goods, not satisfaction. Even raw selfish consuming desire is thus not incompatible with a genuine unself-conscious rejoicing in the goods nature provides us. It is only in our moral and psychological theories that we have come to believe that we are all engaged in the self-conscious pursuit of our own satisfaction—which view necessarily entails the reduction of nature to an aspirin-like resource.

Toward a Critique of Human Rights

If religious perception is also allowed to gain intellectual and public respectability, even richer phenomenological interpretations of nature may come forth. Some of the counterculture found new sense in primitive forms of animism. Pantheism is still a vital doctrine in much of India. Biblical and Aristotelian ideas of the dignity and structure of nature are still deeply interwoven in the religious and cultural traditions of the West. All people affected by these influences must already live in far richer worlds than they publicly admit.

What intellectual or social changes would be necessary in order to release these salvific forces? I would not wish even to hazard a guess at this time, given the complexity of human history. But there is one element of such an awakening which is quite closely related to this essay, and therefore deserves attention here: a critique of human rights, and indeed of rights *per se.*

We will begin to be open to nature not when we stridently demand that animals be given their "rights" to a fair share of enjoyment, but when we stop demanding human rights. The idea of human rights is to some degree responsible for the reduction of nature to a resource, and so should be criticized.

This reduction is obvious under any utilitarian concept of human rights. The only good is here declared to be the collective subjective happiness of the humans or animals taken into consideration. We can engage in utilitarian thinking only if we have already put aside our pure phenomenological experience, and reduced nature to a means to happiness. This calculus thus forces us to lie about nature and about ourselves.

Contractualist versions of rights also require the same destruction of nature. Here the formula used is that I must morally or legally grant others the same benefits which I want myself. But surely this formula works, or is even relevant, only to the extent that everyone's desires can be reduced to self-satisfaction. For as long as we believe that we pursue the good for its own sake, and not for our benefit, then we are not being unfair to our neighbors in ignoring their benefits as well. And even where I am being selfish, say, in planting a flower garden, this formula can at most require that I allow others also to plant flowers—not that I grant equal space, say, to tomato growers. In other words, contractualism (with its slogan of "fairness") can be a universal doctrine resolving all human conflict only if it engages in the same kind of reduction inherent in utilitarianism. Otherwise it cannot adjudicate moral or legal conflicts among different principles or ideas of the good.

The very "feel" of the word "rights" betrays its destructive character: it connotes a stridency, a closed-mindedness, a demand for arbitrary power not easily compatible with the kind of phenomenological sensitivity we need. How could someone constantly thinking of his (or others') property rights over a forest ever come to experience trees with respect? How can someone demanding his rights pay much attention to the common religious idea that all life is a *gift* which ought to call forth gratitude? (To my knowledge, none of the ancient religions gave the idea of "rights" any prominence; this emphasis is entirely modern.)

If we can come to think less about our individual and collective human rights, nature may again have the time and space to emerge as an entity with some ability to limit us because it is seen to have some authority over us. This course has its risks, particularly for those who are afraid of losing their rights or of losing some of the easier ways to resolve human conflicts, but it alone may be capable of revealing the dignity of nature.

Church Leadership

A Management Perspective

David S. Luecke

Leadership is always an attractive topic. It is a good thing to have. For many, in or out of churches, a leader is a good thing to be. At any given time, all sorts of people can be found who think more leadership is needed. The history of thought is rich with ruminations about what it is and how to do it.

Much thought about leadership amounts to a celebration of what works, or at least seems to work. When the affairs of a body of people are going well, congratulatory affirmations of existing leadership are well-received. Such thinking is usually not very perceptive. It produces descriptions of existing characteristics and practices, with implied exhortation for others to be and do likewise.

In recent times the serious study of leadership has tried to focus on analysis rather than description. One of the conditions of our times is that few bodies of people, be they clubs, organizations, nations—or churches—are so stable that what exists can be counted on to produce good results in the long run. Coping with change calls for analysis. Causal relationships have to be identified, to the extent possible. Previously accepted ways of doing things have to be evaluated in the light of possible alternatives and their results. Desired outcomes have to be more carefully understood. In the absence of insights about what is most important to them and how these things might be pursued differently, the led and their leaders may discover that their vitality has wasted away with the tides of change. A changing environment makes tough demands. Trouble is one of the greatest stimulants for clearing the mind to think carefully, which should mean analytically.

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Most of the historically-established Protestant church bodies in North America are in trouble today. Change is taking its toll. Certainly the Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and United Church of Christ churches—to name the largest of those in trouble—are very much alive, strong, and taken seriously by a large proportion of Americans. But they are not growing. After over a century of continued growth, their membership charts have shown a leveling off and general decline in the last decade or so. There are occasional hints that the downward trend may have stopped. But at a time when the total population of this country—the people to be served—continues to expand, these bodies of publicly-acknowledged Christians appear to have lost their momentum. More precisely, they are not attracting new people into their fellowship at nearly the rate they used to.

Is Membership Decline a Problem?

By normal ways of reckoning, leaders should recognize this development as trouble. Certainly it means trouble with paying the bills for the overhead that accumulated during the growing years. But more fundamentally, it means trouble because the very vitality of these churches is in question. What they have to offer is viewed by a smaller proportion of people as sufficiently attractive to give their vote of membership.

How disturbing to these churches should this emerging verdict be? Human nature being what it is, the answers vary. To those who concentrate only on the divine pole of the church's dual identity—God and people—membership size is of little consequence. God does what he will, and out of loyalty we should not question the results. To those who concentrate on the historical human roots of these American denominations, the current condition is understandable and, for many, only mildly disturbing. The explanation is in the declining birthrate, demographic shifts, and changes in cultural values. It is inevitable that churches will experience the consequences in membership, and there is little to be done except cope with a downslide gracefully.

One can argue, however, that what the membership charts show should be profoundly disturbing to these churches and their leaders. On the divine end of what

The dynamic growth of the evangelical churches offers strong challenge to the easy answer that little can be done to rejuvenate older, more rooted, and apparently tired church bodies.

they are dealing with, the God of historical Christianity says He has something very good and special to offer to people and He wants as many as possible to experience it. He expects His church to bring that about. On the human end of the current condition, the declining churches cannot avoid noting that other Christian denominations and groups seem to be overcoming these apparently unfavorable circumstances. The newer, evangelical movement is growing. Indeed, by normal reckoning it is thriving. Polite analysis would be much easier if that fact were not so stubbornly evident. It offers strong challenge to the easy answer that little can be done by older, more rooted, and apparently tired church bodies.

Should We Imitate the Evangelicals?

If shrugging off the meaning of numbers is too easy, so is an exhortation to imitate the evangelicals. It is tempting indeed to say whatever they are doing must be right; let's try it. Such an approach would suffer from the limitation of a descriptive understanding of leadership. What works with given personalities, groups, and circumstances may not work with others. It is more promising to analyze why certain combinations seem effective. What sort of things is leadership in the church supposed to accomplish anyway, and how can people who are supposed to be leaders meet those expectations?

An analytical approach to leadership is what modern management studies pursue. Such analysis is focused not only on how manufacturing and service businesses can make more profit but also on how welfare, education, and health undertakings can become more effective at what they are doing. Why not the churches, too?

There is a comprehensive model of leadership represented by the management perspective. The proposition to be defended here is that such a model should be more fully incorporated into current thinking about what church leadership should be and do. One way to advance the cause is to demonstrate with specifics what such an approach can produce, but that discussion is best pursued in other settings. The focus here is on a generalized rationale for how the management perspective can help fill needs in the church's way of doing things. The recurring theme in that rationale is that churches should be working harder to combine intent and action, theory and practice. Why that is necessary and how the management perspective can help will be argued in six ways:

1. Management presents a model for how leaders can focus attention on combining intent and action in systematic ways. This model is as religiously neutral as the leadership models of shepherd, teacher, and father.

2. Management studies provide a framework for thinking about purposeful community development. In Protestantism the community of a congregation is the fundamental context in which Christian life is experienced. Communities are developed through organization.

3. Because of cultural shifts, community building has risen in importance today in churches that earlier could concentrate on community maintenance. There is consequently a greater need for ministers to develop structuring skills as well as maintenance skills.

4. Without the provision of leadership models that explicitly combine intent and action, the church leadership of ministers is increasingly likely to find itself dealing with these dimensions separately and thus less effectively. The source of model building, the intellectual environment of professional education for the ministry, has grown more inclined to deal with theory apart from practice. A fresh intellectual focus can spark new creativity.

5. Originally rooted in practice, the study of management has added significant theoretical foundations in its recent evolution. It represents a way of thinking about achievement of goals that emphasizes analysis. That way of thinking is what is transferable to church endeavors.

6. The pursuit of management questions in the church context offers a productive meeting place for exchange between a variety of disciplines that can contribute to improving church life.

1. *Management represents a model for how leaders can focus attention on combining intent and action in systematic ways.*

"Model" has become a favorite concept among people who take analytic endeavors seriously—endeavors that cover a broad range of human activity. Analysts seem intent on constructing models, and models fall in and out of popularity. A model is an effort to simplify by extracting out of a complex and confusing reality some parts and relationships that seem interesting. A particular model is good to the extent that it enables people to deal with the full reality of whatever they are involved with in satisfactory ways. For leaders, satisfaction is good results for whatever they are leading. When a model no longer brings expected results, the search is on for a better one.

That major church bodies have lost some of their vitality should lead to an examination of their leadership models. Over the centuries God's people have used many different models of leadership. They have focused on what is done by a patriarch, judge, prophet, priest, elder, presbyter, bishop, president, teacher, pastor, counselor, preacher, minister. Almost always these models were borrowed at some point from other pursuits of life that were familiar. As the community

changed, the model changed.

Perhaps the most dominant model of leadership in society today is that of manager, with its closely related images of administrator and executive. As with most terms that receive very heavy popular usage, the concept has become fuzzy for many and it carries a heavy load of connotations, not always favorable. The baggage will probably interfere with widespread adoption of the terminology from this model. But the adoption of models does not revolve around titles. Analysts reach out for concepts.

The proposition advanced here is that the concepts and perspectives featured in a managerial model of leadership offer good prospects for helping churches in trouble restore vitality. The management model can do that by focusing attention on combining intent and action in systematic ways, ways that clarify intent according to what can be accomplished and that organize action around involving participants in those intentions. As a way of thinking, the managerial model is neutral. It is no less or more religious than thinking about shepherds, teachers, or fathers.

Like most good models, the managerial outlook appears simple, uninterestingly simple for many at first glance. In essence, management is the effort of influencing behavior toward accomplishing goals. It does this by planning what is to be accomplished, organizing the effort, getting people into place, coordinating the activity, and evaluating the results. Focusing on action inevitably leads to questions of how and why, and those questions have a way of leading into diverse and complicated answers. In churches, those answers can become profound. The management perspective calls for expanding and refining the knowledge and skills of leaders beyond the intellectual framework and the accepted practices inherited from traditional models. This model may well have its greatest value in the challenge of rigorously combining intent and action.

2. *The parish community is the fundamental unit for experiencing Christian life and it comes about through organized endeavors.*

The traditions for the work of ministry in the church are rich with centuries of theory and practice. Our legacy, as it is passed on in the professional education of clergy, seems to have a curious gap, though. Much is discussed and written about ministry to "people," which usually refers to people in general and in undifferentiated large numbers. When we want to get specific, our attention is directed to individuals and the work of counseling and caring for people one by one. The gap in our theory is the ministry to people in clusters of 100, or 600, or 2,000. This intermediate level of attention, of course, is the congregation. The work of parish ministers is more focused than presenting generalities and more general than caring for individuals. The theory of church is understandably general when formulated by theologians who are trying to be as comprehensive as possible. In turn parish ministers tend to get too immersed in dealing with 500 or 1500 people to formulate a theoretical framework for their work.

Yet the parish is the basic unit of the church. One can assert that everything else that happens ecclesiastically and theologically is derivative of the scattered unit of Christians meeting together regularly in their congregations. While debatable, such an assertion seems consistent with American Protestant theology and practice. It would seem reasonable, then, that thought about the life of the church should proceed from an intellectual base that recognizes the dynamics of defined gatherings of Christians routinely acting out religious life with specific other people.

Seeing Congregations as Organizations

Perhaps one reason why the congregation as community has not been in the center of discussion of church life is that a set of concepts for dealing with it has not been broadly known and accepted. The tradition is strong in conceptual tools for deriving theological abstractions and generalizations, tools shaped in an age when deductive normative declarations were the basis of educated discourse. The forefront for many in the past several decades has been in dealing with conceptual tools for individual care, frequently borrowed from psychology. A conceptual framework for dealing with congregations as distinct entities is now widely available as it was not a generation or two ago. These tools come from the areas of organization theory and management theory.

By all outward appearances, congregations are organizations. Church thinkers and writers have generally preferred to avoid that fact, knowing that there must be more to the church than being an organization similar to the many others we encounter all around us. Of course they are correct; its divine nature makes the church unique. Nevertheless, the unavoidable (and precious) human nature of the church places it squarely in the midst of organizational dynamics. This organizational nature of the church is all the more evident when the congregation is posited as its fundamental ecclesiastical and theological unit. It should be a natural evolution to apply to thinking about church life the now fairly mature conceptual framework for understanding organizations.

At one level organization and community are very similar concepts. Both describe the same phenomenon: a defined grouping of people brought together by com-

mon interests and conducting themselves in ways that aid the pursuit of those interests. Communities and organizations are successful blendings of diversity and commonality of people in real time and place. Both concepts are beautifully summarized and described in the New Testament analogy of the Body of Christ with all of its different members working together.

The key difference between community and organization is the degree of purposefulness or rationality that goes into the blending of diversity and commonality. Organization is the planned and controlled pursuit of mutual interests. Community tends to be the celebration of what results. The rationality of the prior endeavor, the planning and control, tends to render the organizational aspect of the church suspect. Ultimately what makes thoughts and behaviors religious is the purpose, which has something to do with responding to transcendence. Explicitly recognizing what personal responses will be favored and how people will be influenced to give those responses appears to interject a non-religious element into the very reason for the existence of the community. But leadership to community through organization is unavoidable.

Leadership as Community Building

Organizational leadership amounts to community building. Perhaps one reason such leadership has not received more attention is that the building of church community has not been well-addressed. In most theological discussions community is taken as a given and its advantages are then expounded. If an origin needs to be found, the path usually leads quickly and without complication to the divine Giver, God in Christ through the Holy Spirit. So long as we are talking about church community, this explanation of divine origin must ultimately be correct. Yet in the very human world where we all spend our time, many practitioners of civic, social, and economic pursuits know that lively, constructive, supportive communities do not just appear of a day, any more than fresh wholesome bread appears on the table miraculously at meal times (even though it is ultimately provided by a gracious God). Bringing people together with enough shared commitment to a common interest to lay aside for a while their diverse individual claims is hard, demanding work that can easily fail. It is work unavoidably done by real people with weaknesses and shortcomings as well as a few strengths of perseverance and insight. Communities are built. When they occur, human leaders are at work. That leadership can be found dealing explicitly with purposes in working out problems of focusing energy and influencing behavior through organizational forms.

If the church is community (as Scripture states), and if the church community expresses itself in scattered finite communities of congregations (as Protestantism declares), and if even church communities are unavoidably built by human leaders, however much under God's guidance (as simple observation suggests), then the task of purposeful community building in the congregation is very, very important. As an essential means to that end, so also is organizational leadership.

3. *Because of cultural shifts, the leadership of ministers has to address community building through filling structural needs.*

Probably the basic reason our traditions of thought about church life have not focused energetically on community building is that for much of its history the church and its leaders could take for granted the presence of community, or at least the potential for its development without complicated effort. In stable periods with low mobility, interaction inevitably occurred around centers of residence and work. The village was usually a very effective community, and the parish was virtually co-extensive with it. Even through their rapidly changing evolution, many American church bodies could build congregations among people with considerable commonality through ethnic identity and interaction. The community mentality of the village was not many generations removed and new villages sprang up, whether on the countryside of Wisconsin or at 40th and Central in the city. Sufficient social interaction for community was present. The necessary traditional ministerial functions could be effective. Congregations could thrive on the community building that many participants provided without self-conscious attention.

When people present themselves with well-formed cultural habits that appreciate community and know how to bring it about, their demands on leadership are narrowed. The study of leadership has highlighted three basic dimensions of providing leadership: expressing values, providing structure, and offering support. The leadership dimensions actually amount to a way of categorizing the very general needs that people can have when they are trying to do something together. The followers let themselves be influenced to the extent that they see their needs as being satisfied. They can experience a strong need to have emphasized among themselves the values that bring them together in the first place, the benefits they are hoping to realize through common effort. They then respond to leadership that forcefully expresses those values. Or they may need to work out some patterns of interaction with each other that have frequency and consistency sufficient for their common purpose, and they then expect leadership in developing structures. Or they may be looking for support and encouragement that recognizes their individuality and helps them work out their own adjustment

In the last several decades the church has found itself existing in a culture far removed from the ethnic or village mentality that produced the parish community that leaders could take for granted.

on the demands placed on them for the common endeavor.

These categories of needs and their related dimensions of leadership are not just philosophical assumptions. They have evolved through the research and observations of a wide variety of students of leadership. Structure and support are the two most commonly discussed dimensions in management literature, appearing under names such as Initiating Structure and Consideration, or Task Orientation and People Orientation. Expressing values, or dealing with symbols is highlighted more in discussion of top level management, and many of the insights in the literature originate from political science.

Leadership as Expression of Values

Communities that have a large proportion of members who can bring themselves into interaction in satisfying ways on their own have a low need for additional leadership in developing structure. Their needs will be oriented more toward maintaining structure. For that purpose they will look for leadership that helps express values and that offers support. It is natural that out of a background of existing community the traditional concepts of ministry have been oriented toward those needs. The intellectual effort revolves around clarifying and preaching the values that have been so carefully formulated over the centuries. Significantly, in many traditions these values are formally labeled as symbols. The practical effort revolves around support, or *Seelsorge,* or pastoral care. Structuring is viewed as mainly a passive activity of preserving order or representing authority.

In a time of questioning models, certainly these dimensions of expressing values and offering support need to be re-evaluated and clearly focused. But the remaining dimension, providing structure, deserves even more attention. Indeed, it would seem that it is in the development of this dimension that the most improvement can be found in the effectiveness in the church leadership ministers can provide.

The reason for highlighting and upgrading structuring activities is that people who would form themselves into the community of the Body of Christ no longer seem to have a prevalence of the cultural habits that produce relatively effortless interaction around church life. Part of the explanation is that social interaction in general seems more difficult in our present culture. Certainly alienation and isolation are major themes of current sociological studies. Mobility has seriously fractured the understanding of community anchored in location. But another part of the explanation is that competing structures, that is, patterns of relationships, have become more dominant. Careers, as distinct from jobs, are a major preoccupation of many people who expect to define their lives in the interaction that occurs around their specialty. These are often the assertive laymen who would have been expected to provide the routine structural leadership of church life in former generations. Increasingly men and women expect to establish their social identity in joining others in the pursuit of special interests or recreation or causes. Our society sends out constant messages that fulfillment comes from finding new, different, and stimulating sets of interaction.

In the last several decades the church has found itself existing in a culture far removed from the ethnic or village mentality that produced the parish community that leaders could take for granted. The fundamental need for building relationships around church life has correspondingly become great, perhaps even acute. Community maintenance functions are not sufficient if the church expects to remain lively and compelling. Leadership models that stress community building have to gain credence. To that end, improving the understanding of organizational dynamics is unavoidable.

Shifting from community maintenance to community building involves more than highlighting structure. It has implications for other dimensions of leadership as well. To consciously decide on entering into greater interaction with others, participants need to have a clear and compelling understanding of the benefits. Thus the expression of values has to orient itself more explicitly to why church community should exist. From the structural viewpoint, the goals of the organization have to be clarified and focused. It is striking that the vast literature of theology has very little to say in a systematic way about what the goals of a congregation should be.

The support function may perhaps also refocus itself in a shift to community building. Support involves dealing with the tension between individuality and common endeavor. The commonness expresses itself in standards or norms of attitudes and behavior. Without such norms, community can hardly exist. Community norms necessitate some denial of individuality. Easy resolution of that inherent tension can come through de-emphasizing one or the other pole—the standards or the individual. The church certainly has a history of sacrificing individuality. But under current models of counseling for self-realization, ministers may perhaps be found too readily sacrificing the standards. To participate in community, individuals have to adjust to the norms, and good leadership helps them do that.

4. *Ministers are increasingly left to deal with theory and practice separately and the management perspective offers a new focus for keeping the two together.*

There was a time in many seminaries where parish experience was a necessity for a seminary appointment. But today in many centers of theological education, the parish is not a basic concern.

The tension between intent and action, theory and practice, is of course hardly new. It has existed throughout the history of intelligent human endeavor. Some people remain more at home in the world of ideas and discussions. Others grow impatient if they are kept too long removed from action and outcomes.

Psychologist David Kolb has developed a model for how people learn that offers fruitful insight. Relating learning and problem solving, he suggests that the learning process calls for four kinds of problem-solving ability. From the concrete involvement with new experience, the learner has to reflect on and observe those experiences, then create concepts for generalizations that integrate those experiences, and finally experiment with or apply those concepts in making decisions or solving problems in the encountered reality. Through research Kolb demonstrates that personality differences tend to cause individuals to emphasize those stages differently. Those habitual differences in orientation show up in choices of field of study and in occupations. Those who favor the application of concepts tend to become engineers and nurses. Natural science interests are favored by those who in their own thinking emphasize conceptualization based on observation. The humanities and social sciences are attractive to people whose learning style focuses on observation through experience. People whose style stays close to application and experience tend to be most comfortable in fields of immediate action, which they typically find in business.

Separation of Intent and Action

These views on learning styles Kolb applies to management education with the theme that the styles are complementary and learning should be pursued in ways that integrate them. The need for integration is relatively self-evident in the development of management leadership, since the participants who are prone to observe and conceptualize—that is, faculty—recognize that the objective is leadership in a world of action.

Ultimately it is the observers and conceptualizers who develop the models of leadership that are dominant in any of the various fields of endeavor, also outside management. They write and talk. They also teach, especially in higher education. As teachers they are major influences on future leaders in their formative stages. This impact of full-time faculty is especially dominant for the development of the clergy that churches look to for leadership. The established churches require that their clergy be seminary-educated.

The starting point for this argument for greater recognition of the management perspective in church leadership was that we are witnessing social forces that tend to separate intent and action. One of those forces is the growing importance of advanced academic pursuits in general.

The doctoral degree now stands as the symbol of commitment to a discipline. It is only in the past generation or two that the Ph.D. became the norm in this country for a successful teaching career in the schools that educate church leaders, the seminaries. First-hand experience in the work of the church is less valued. There was a time in many seminaries where parish experience was a necessity for a seminary appointment. But today in many centers of theological education, the parish itself is no longer a basic concern; they have student bodies with only a minority of students aspiring to a parish pastorate. A seemingly inevitable result of this trend is a growing separation of reflection and conceptualization from application and experience. The models of ministry formulated and demonstrated in such context will not place a high value on community building through organizational endeavor. This is not to say that having an impact on church life is regarded as unimportant. But developing the analytical framework and leadership skills for putting ideas into action among a specific community of Christians is not likely to receive featured attention.

If indeed the traditional model builders for church leadership are likely to have their minds on something other than the work of developing communities of Christians, how is that work being carried on? Not surprisingly, much of it is being carried on without any particular intellectual framework. In many cases, quite successfully. A Chicago-area newspaper recently featured a suburban movie-theater-based church that had started five years earlier and regularly had over 2,000 in attendance at Sunday worship. By all outward indicators, it was very successful. The founding pastor and moving force was then 28 years old. One of his ambitions for the future was to get a seminary education. He had not had time for this educational pursuit earlier because there was so much work to be done. One was left wondering how a seminary education and all it presumably stands for would be a help to him.

As is so often noted, church life is alive and quite healthy in certain sectors of Protestantism. Media ministries and other forms of the evangelical movement seem to show plenty of evidence of effective church leadership. The reaction from so many quarters in the established church bodies is a somewhat patronizing attitude toward "they" who are quite different from "we." That reaction seems to go beyond the natural parochial protection of self-interest. It also seems to convey a cultural accusation. "They" are not very sophisticated in what they are doing. "They" have a weak theology. "They" have an incomplete concept of ministry. Seemingly at the heart of these disclaimers is the charge that so many

of the visible and effective activists in building bodies of Christians do not reflect and conceptualize very well about what they are doing. Without the theory they are hard to take seriously.

So who needs theory? One could take the position that the results should speak for themselves. The churches that have let their leadership models slip away from practice will just have to take the consequences.

There are at least two reasons to advocate strengthening the tension between theory and practice in ministry. One considers the cultural differences that to a great degree do distinguish the people associated with the established churches from those who respond to the evangelical practice. By temperament and education they do expect the promise that their practices come formulated through careful theory and rooted in tradition. Uninformed practice will not serve the constituencies of these older, traditional churches as well as possible.

The second reason for promoting practice coupled with theory is worry about what will happen in the long run without it. Historically man's relationship with God has not been an easy affair. Religious response involves emotions, and emotions change—sometimes rapidly and in unanticipated directions. Society changes and cultural messages about approved behavior and values change. The staying power of church bodies will ultimately depend on how well they formulate what they are doing and why. Without such understanding, the successful practice of today can produce the withered, aging communities of tomorrow, wondering what went wrong.

To retain their vitality, churches cannot escape the need to be continually at work combining practice and theory—not just reluctantly but with vigor and enthusiasm. Adding a new focus for asking questions and answering them may help contribute a fresh dimension of enthusiasm and creativity. The management perspective can provide such a focus.

5. *The study of management has added significant theoretical foundations which offer insights transferable to church endeavors.*

The historic reluctance that thinkers about the churches' welfare have had toward taking management perspectives seriously can be readily understood. In its early stages management as a disciplined way of thinking about problems was intellectually not very respectable. But the field has evolved considerably in the past several decades and today represents a fairly mature and demanding outlook that has a broad range of applications. Church opinion leaders who have not taken a serious look at the management discipline in the past ten or fifteen years are missing a valuable source of help in solving problems.

The value of that help may not be apparent in observing practitioners who are working in organizational contexts different from the church. Nor, for reasons to be explained, will that value always become apparent by looking at people within the church who like to use the titles and terminology of management or administration. The argument advanced here is that the most significant value lies in a way of thinking—asking questions and formulating answers—that is advocated and taught in better schools of administration. That way of thinking focuses on solving problems through analysis, more specifically solving the wide range of problems that can prevent organizations from effectively achieving their goals.

Moving from Description to Analysis

Such an analytical emphasis is different from offering a repository of accepted practices. This descriptive orientation characterized most business education in its formative years. Indeed, description characterizes the early stages of just about every modern academic discipline. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, biology, for instance, concentrated on cataloging all the animal and life forms, and psychology was busy developing schemes to identify and measure important traits of personality. Faculty teaching administration in the 1940s and 1950s were mostly collecting material on seemingly successful practices and techniques in the various branches of business enterprise. Business education revolved around making those practices understandable enough to a student to have him move out quickly and take his place in the ranks of practitioners of the various specialties. Advanced courses were likely to treat increasingly narrowed practices and techniques, much of them oriented towards how to operate different kinds of offices.

Because of its size and pervasiveness, the world of commerce was a natural starting place for the study of administration. Schools for that purpose were making their appearance in the 1930s. Other major sectors of society that are heavily dependent on organizations and their administration are health, education, and welfare. In the 1940s and 1950s each developed its own centers for studying administration with programs in hospital administration, school administration, and social welfare administration. The literature in each of those areas had its early stage of extensive description. To study hospital administration in the 1950s was to master manuals on how to organize and operate the various departments of a hospital, such as the food service or the pharmacy.

The church sector of society has not developed recognizable centers for programs for the study of adminis-

tration. Perhaps the need was not as apparent as for the other sectors, because the organization units are small and scattered and the resources not as concentrated. That early stage in the development of administrative studies in other sectors did witness in the church the creation of the National Association of Church Administrators with its own regular journal, *Church Management.* It was probably inevitable that the understanding of administration represented by that effort is quite descriptive and also quite oriented to the practices of the dominant enterprise, business, that seem intuitively relevant to churches. Thus the church manager in that context is mostly overseer of finances, and as such church administration revolves around practices of purchasing, record keeping, and building maintenance. To read the journal of church management is to learn about buying choir gowns, controlling heating expenses, or investing funds. While viewing such functions as necessary, most ministers understandably have not recognized them as vital to their professional work. If administration is perceived with that narrow focus, ministers can be forgiven for failing to see it as a significant part of the leadership they seek to provide.

Business Education Comes of Age

A turning point of sorts occurred in business education in 1959. That year marked the publication of two separate works, sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, respectively, that were quite critical of the dominant patterns of business education to that time. These reports called for a decided shift away from progressively-detailed descriptive studies to work at a higher level of analytical content. Courses that could not offer a significant amount of theory were viewed as too vocational and thus as inappropriate in the college curriculum. Through the 1960s the called-for change in emphasis did occur to a great degree, aided by a greater supply of theoretically-oriented faculty with doctorates.

Greater emphasis on theory would not be possible without the availability of theory. The sort of theory that is most relevant to conducting the affairs of organizations is that which supports analysis. There have been primarily two sources: quantitative studies and the social and behavioral sciences. The literature of management has become heavily infused with models, insights, and analytical techniques that have their roots in those basic disciplines. In many ways, the study of administration today amounts to the study of quantitative analysis and applied social sciences.

What this means for the churches is that it is now possible to think about church leadership in terms of management models, concepts, insights, and emphases that either were not available or were not well-developed twenty years ago. Church leadership has to concern itself with combining intent and action, theory and practice, among defined collections of Christians in numbers of about 200 to 2,000. Management is the discipline that most directly concerns itself with doing precisely that, not just for business but for general organized endeavor. Historically rooted in practice, the study of management has added theoretical roots that make it intellectually challenging. That theory also makes it transferable to church endeavors.

6. *The pursuit of management questions in the church context offers a productive meeting place for exchange between a variety of disciplines.*

As discussed in the previous section, management has come to be understood as the pursuit of analytical questions. In essence, these questions are, What should we try to do through common endeavors and how can we accomplish it? No one discipline has the corner on answering these questions. In its best form, management thinking is eclectic. Because it is continually answerable to practitioners, it knows the questions. But the answers are constantly evolving and, one hopes, getting better. Whatever contributes to a better answer is welcome.

The question of what we are trying to accomplish is, of course, not a foreign one in churches. Theologians have been dealing with it for centuries. The management perspective for churches, however, would keep adding the challenge of thinking theologically about community. Specifically, it would continually invite attention to what is supposed to happen in a parish or congregation. Managers think about goals, and they prefer to think about them as outcomes that can be expressed in terms of specific behavior and that can be placed in a priority order. The track record of theology does not demonstrate an eagerness to bring its abstractions to that applied level of Christians organized as congregations, not just individuals. Continued exchange should be productive.

Behavioral scientists know a lot about why people behave the way they do and how behavior can be changed. They tend to start with the individual and consider how the individual can find a more satisfying life. Management thinks about how people can contribute to specified needs of groupings of others, while at the same time filling their own needs. That dialogue is well-along. It has not been a particularly lively dialogue, though, in the church context. When behavioral thinking can be found in the church (which is not very often), it is wedded to the pastoral care of individuals and not particularly oriented to achieving community ends. Management dialogue with counselors should be productive.

A more basic, desirable exchange may well be that

Where community has thrived, organization has existed. The church has always had managers.

between a behaviorist outlook and the generalized normative outlook characteristic of the church's way of operating. Telling people what to do is one of the least effective ways of getting them to do it. Asking the question of how Christians can be influenced to change attitudes and invest energy in defined directions presents the possibility of a broad range of answers—answers that the behavioral sciences point to and management practices. Continued exchange should be productive.

Managers have a strong inclination to quantify. In order to have a reasonable sense of comprehensiveness of what they are doing, they have to simplify diversity by aggregating it and assigning representative values. They are most comfortable when they can measure or place these quantified representations in some order. They then watch what happens when they intervene with their various actions. Church thinking tends to focus on uniqueness and to resist common denominators that are not theologically defined. Such thinking tends to get lost in the complexity it encounters and does not lend itself to observing how much movement there has been toward accomplishing what has been defined as important. Similar in dealing with abstractions, theology and quantification differ in their usefulness for evaluating movement. The two attitudes could generate a productive dialogue.

Church History as Managerial History

One last suggestion of fruitful exchange between disciplines is different from the others in that it would look backward instead of forward. The Christian church is a church of traditions, and it rightfully takes pride in its long history of the survival of its communities and the service they have provided. The assertion was made in the first section that usually organization is necessary for community. A corollary is that where community has thrived, organization has existed. More specifically, the church has always had managers. While perhaps many of these managers were not clergymen, a goodly number probably were. One need not have adopted the concepts and terminology of twentieth-century management to have been a good practitioner of it in the fourth century or the sixteenth century. It may be an interesting and potentially very fruitful exercise for church historians to review the changing fortunes of the church from this perspective. The hypothesis would be that where the church has been strong and a vital part of society somewhere in its leadership it had people who intuitively knew how to be good managers, even though they may not have been the most historically prominent participants of that time. Fostering the managerial perspective would then amount to increasing the chances that such leadership would emerge in the future.

Argument

Is it because I am
naturally contrary

that I hear hairy
and think smooth

hear shave
and think beard

hear ritual
and think freedom

or is it because
I am an only child

shifting loyalties—
sisterless, like Eve

who heard rib
and thought placenta

heard forbidden
and thought freedom

heard fruit
and thought ritual

having no brother
except Adam

Letter from Jonah's Mother

His father and I
were willing to believe
that Jonah could find himself
in Ninevah, as part
of the counter culture.

But Jonah showed only contempt
toward anything we approved,
deceiving us and enlisting
for a Mediterranean tour.

Later we got word
he'd joined a caravan
as a swallower of something—
goldfish, fire, swords
(the story kept growing).

We're resigned now.
We could do as well
to vent our anger
on a gourd.
And after all
Jonah is our boy.

Kathryn Christenson

Worrying About Our Families

Or, Why Is My Family So Weird?

Dot Nuechterlein

It has happened again.

When teaching classes in the Sociology of the Family I have been struck by the number of students who, in class discussion and private conversation, indicate an uneasiness about their own families. Again this fall when one person expressed the thought "My family is kind of weird," nods and rueful smiles came from a number of fellow students.

This response intrigues me because:

(1) My recent teaching/counseling experience has been in two universities which attract middle-class and privileged students almost exclusively. Few of them come from truly disturbed circumstances, and in further discussion it becomes obvious that most have stable, "normal" family relationships.

(2) Through the years I have noticed a similar anxiety among many older persons, also. Even adults who have been married for a while and whose children appear to be no more troubled than anyone else's sometimes display a vague concern about life at home.

(3) In contrast, I remember as a probation/parole officer some years ago dealing with families which had extremely serious problems, yet seldom did either parents or offspring exhibit this quiet worry I notice in my students and other acquaintances.

Why do those who, on the surface at least, have less to fret over seem the more distressed?

It is possible, of course, that there is a difference in expressiveness between the two groups—that my former clients were simply more stoical than my friends. It is also possible that there are a great many skeletons in a great many family closets, and that all of those apprehensive people really do have a lot of burdens to carry.

Possible, but not so likely in my estimation as a third explanation.

I suspect that most of us carry around with us an idealized picture of what families should be like: a sort of "mythical family of perpetual harmony." This image has grown from religious precepts and common cultural values, and is nourished by television programs, novels, and other media sources. Although the precise formation of the ideal family may be a bit fuzzy, at the core there is a sense of community, a fellowship of love and support surrounding all of the members.

None of us, however, lives in a family like that. Human beings are sometimes too self-concerned, sometimes too impulsive to live in anything like constant peace or joy, or even unity of purpose. We are often simply awful creatures to put up with. And there are the inevitable disappointments and sorrows of daily existence besides. Families with lots of sunshine and high points still have plenty of grim periods to get through.

Still, somehow we hold the pretty picture up next to the mirror and compare ourselves with it. In addition, we observe the other family groups around us, and notice the discrepancies between their situations and our own. Sure, we are not so badly off as some; but so many seem to fare so much better than we do. What is their secret? *What is wrong with us?*

Nothing. If truth be known, few see a smiling face in their own mirror. The portrait of the blissful ideal family is an optical illusion, for there are not enough of that type around to serve as a model. Insofar as we keep our sorrows and our skeletons to ourselves, we do not realize how typical we really are. As for the multi-problem families of my probation days, it could be that they were often so very far from the image that it was pointless for them to dwell on the difference. Perhaps it is those who think they have a fighting chance to achieve something but fall short who end up feeling like failures.

It would be helpful, I think, if teachers, pastors, and others who have the opportunity would use their influence in tearing down the myth of the harmonious family. There is nothing wrong with having ideals, but unrealistic expectations can only lead to unnecessary grief. The concept of forgiveness, that shedding of the past and beginning anew, is essential to getting through our days in a psychological sense, quite apart from its theological meaning.

As I try to tell my students, and I wish I could tell all my friends, a counsel of perfection can only end in despair. Most of our families are indeed only ordinary, but that should not be so difficult a thing to live with as it often seems to be.

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Theatre

Transients

Revivals of Sherwood And Steinbeck Recall the Theatre of the Thirties

John Steven Paul

Ironically enough, the Thirties were in many ways the best years the American theatre has known.

Perhaps the openings in different Chicago theatres of two plays written in the 1930s is nothing more than a mildly remarkable coincidence. But the fact that Robert E. Sherwood's *The Petrified Forest* and John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* have been given such honest and meaningful productions in the eighties provides an opportunity for consideration of the American theatre of the thirties.

In many ways the thirties were the best years the American theatre has ever known. While other national institutions suffered during the Great Depression, the national drama developed from an interesting imitation of its British and European counterparts to a distinctively American form. It is indeed conceivable that the harsh economic conditions fostered the maturation of the American drama: the Depression may well have been a lens focusing the attention of American playwrights on indigenous social issues, incidents, characters, and stories.

Contemporary and historical accounts of America in the early 1930s report that the nation's highways were filled with people. Many were road boys, young men with time on their hands and nothing to do. Others were older men, often accompanied by family, escaping hard times in one town in search of prosperity in the next. These were joined by travelers, not desperate but exultant, relishing the advancements in motorcar technology. Add to these the greater than usual number of boxcar bums and drifters, and the picture becomes one of a nation in transit. It was from among the transients that Sherwood and Steinbeck drew the central characters for their plays.

Sherwood chose a location for his action which was designed to draw travelers in from the road. The Black Mesa Bar-B-Q is a last-chance café and gas station on a highway through the Arizona desert. At road's end lies the natural wonder and tourist magnet, the Petrified Forest. Within the café, the playwright constructed a complex environment of objects, characters, and ideas. On the café walls, for instance, are advertisements for those uniquely 1930s institutions, the NRA and the TVA. American Legion posters, a photograph of General Pershing, an American flag, and a sign reading "Tipping is un-American—Keep your change!" overlook a rustic arrangement of four-top tables, booths, a counter, and a cooking area.

The characters at the Black Mesa constitute a human environment; each represents a worldview. Gramp Maple, once a pioneer, strung telegraph wire across the desert and built the Black Mesa Bar-B-Q. His son Jason, formerly a mechanic in Pershing's Army, is a pillar of the local American Legion post and a super-patriot. Jason manages the café. Boze Hertzlinger, an employee, is a young brute, recently graduated from Nevada Tech after an illustrious though largely unnoticed football career. Gabby Maple, a nubile, starry-eyed admirer of Villon, is the daughter of Jason and his former wife. The wife, a French national, named her daughter Gabrielle before deserting the family for Bourges and leaving the girl to wait tables.

The play opens with a political debate. Between bites of his hamburger special, a telephone lineman declares to his comrade that America is in danger. He snidely opines that "rugged individualism" is not going to save the country. The Russians, he continues, are the new pioneers, forging new solutions to social and economic problems. Jason Maple joins the argument. The legionnaire defends his country right or wrong. The two debate the standard questions of the 1930s: Had the American system broken down? Was it time to trade the old capitalist idea in for a more serviceable, socialist model?

The Great Depression forced American writers to focus on indigenous conditions and issues.

Sherwood expands the scope of this argument by introducing a series of transients. First, Alan Squier, a failed writer and intellectual veteran of two continents. Squier describes himself as one of T. S. Eliot's "Hollow Men." He is determined to die a poetic, if dusty, death in the Petrified Forest. Next, come representatives of the economic upper crust: the Chisolms in their slick new Dusenberg driven by their sleek Negro driver. Finally, the infamous Mantee gang appears.

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Steinbeck's story of George and Lenny, and of their futile pursuit of the little house, the couple of acres, and the rabbits, is by now a classic American tragedy.

These interstate desperadoes, led by a genuine rugged individualist, Duke Mantee, are escaping their recent murderous escapade in Oklahoma City. At Mantee's suggestion everyone in the café decides to sit very quietly and kill a little time in conversation.

Thus the playwright has brought together this motley group of transients. They proceed to review the possible roads to the realization of the American Dream. Jason Maple wants to travel to Los Angeles to become a power in the American Legion. The Chisolms are traveling to Santa Barbara to escape a Dayton, Ohio winter. Mantee is on the road to safety in Mexico in order to enjoy his ill-gotten gains. Boze Hertzlinger is uncertain about which road to travel, but prefers chasing rainbows to settling down. Gabby Maple pines for a Paris she's never seen, but whose atmosphere she is certain will transform her into a serious artist.

It is left for Alan Squier, Sherwood's *raisonneur,* to perceive that the American Dream is not an idea, nor does it lie at the end of some winding road. Either the dream exists in people or it does not exist. Squier identifies Gabby as the vessel of the Dream. Gabby is young, fresh, and female. She is the grandchild of a pioneer and the daughter of a European: a truly New World character. Both the rugged individuals and the intellectuals belong in the Petrified Forest, declares Squier to Mantee, and the future must be deeded to the young.

Squier quickly revises the beneficiary designation on his life insurance policy to read "Gabrielle Maple." He then cooly asks Duke Mantee to put an end to him. The gangster, flattered by this request for his expert services, agrees. A posse arrives [illegible] the drama to its sensational [illegible] usion. Guns blazing and hostages in tow, Mantee readies to make a run for it. He turns to Squier, shoots him dead, and runs out. As the lights dim, Gabby cradles the head of her Byronic wanderer, who has died to set her on the road to the Dream.

The resolution of *The Petrified Forest* is ambiguous. It may well be that Squier has merely exchanged one set of empty illusions for another. Yet, Sherwood invites us to keep our illusions of the American Dream intact for a while longer. John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men,* on the other hand, is a tale of illusions shattered and shattering truth triumphant. The simple and well-known story of two transients—migrant farm workers—hardly needs retelling. George, a small, sinewy man with strong survival instincts, and Lenny, his child-like hulk of a companion without sense enough to come in out of the rain, have etched themselves into the national literary consciousness. Their futile pursuit of the little house, the couple of acres, and the rabbits is a classic American tragedy.

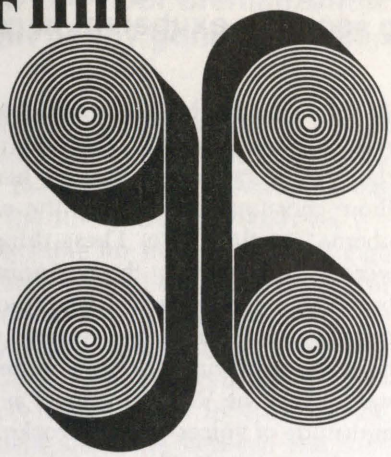
Sherwood and Steinbeck both suggest that the American Dream exists in people or it does not exist at all.

As I watched this stunning performance by the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, I was struck by an exquisite bit of dramatic construction. Early in the play, Steinbeck unravels a minor line of action which serves as parallel to the major line. One of the old hands on the farm where George and Lenny are working keeps an old, decrepit dog as a pet. The dog is blind and lame; it's barely able to care for itself, and it stinks. In short, the dog is an annoyance to others and a burden to its owner, though a burden the old man gladly shoulders for the sake of companionship. Another farmhand insists that the old man allow the dog to be shot, ridding the bunkhouse of a nuisance. The old man resists, but finally allows the dog to be taken from the house. The actors play the remainder of the scene with palpable discomfort. The audience waits for the gun shot with minimal respiration. Finally comes the crack; the dog is dead. Later, at the end of the play, George holds his pistol to the back of the unsuspecting Lenny's head. In that moment, the pathetic old dog's muzzle seems to reappear, merging with Lenny's face, as if in double photographic exposure.

George and Lenny's interaction is often humorous, yet always painful, because one knows how the story must end. As I watched, it occurred to me that John Steinbeck had anticipated Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot,* which was then more than a decade and a world war away. The "little place" where Lenny will tend the rabbits is certainly no less of an illusion to these two than Godot's coming is to Didi and Gogo. The difference in the two plays lies in the form. Where Beckett's characters are largely abstractions, ideas dressed in tramps' clothing, Steinbeck's have the texture of humanity about them. As they live, one senses human presence; when Lenny dies, one senses the loss of that presence. *Of Mice and Men,* like much of American drama, is grounded in characters who are "men of flesh and bone," as Miguel de Unamuno has called them.

Like *The Petrified Forest, Of Mice and Men* is a play about transients in pursuit of the American Dream. Steinbeck appears less concerned with the discussion of ideas than Sherwood, but both share a central conviction: that is, that the Dream has no existence independent of human consciousness. The two plays offer the comic and tragic points of view. Gabby lives, newly enabled to pursue the Dream; Lenny dies, and the Dream dies with him.

Film



Nicholas Nickleby demonstrates that Dickens can be made to work on stage and (maybe) on film.

Doing Dickens Right

Dickens on Stage and (In Fantasy) on Screen

Richard Maxwell

In unravelling the tangled relationships among the arts—especially among novels, plays, and movies—we can have no better starting-point than Dickens. He was a great novelist and a compulsive actor. Ruskin said (somewhat skeptically) that he wrote "in a circle of stage fire," while if we believe Eisenstein, he inspired those breakthroughs in cinematic narrative associated with D. W. Griffith. Dickens should be almost as stageable or filmable as Shakespeare. He is, and yet he is not. In the nineteenth century there were countless plays based on Dickens's novels as more recently there have been countless movies. To the best of my knowledge few of these adaptations have been successful on any terms, except perhaps financial. This is a failure on an epic scale—a failure, moreover, that should not have occurred. Implicated though it is with both movies and plays, Dickens's art has resisted translation into either of these media.

Some readers will be immediately inclined to make exceptions. I have my own—just one—which sets, I think, a reasonable standard for adaptations of Dickens, and also raises some larger aesthetic questions. The Royal Shakespeare Company's *Nicholas Nickleby* (directors Trevor Nunn and John Caird) opened during summer 1980 at the Aldwych Theater in London. I caught a preview performance of the eight-and-a-half hour production, which somewhat improbably became a great hit that season. On October 3 of 1981 *Nicholas Nickleby* re-opened on Broadway, with tickets priced at $100—seven or eight times what they had cost during the London run. This is a success story of some sort.

The British, at least, let Trevor Nunn and his cohorts get away with the ambition to put all of *Nicholas Nickleby* on stage. Forty-three actors played one hundred and fifty characters—real characters, too, with all the vividness we remember from more familiar Dickens novels. Running down the list we find Newman Noggs, Madame Mantalini, Mr. Squeers, Smike, Morleena Kenwigs, Mr. Vincent Crummles, the Infant Phenomenon, Sir Mulberry Hawk, and the Cheeryble Brothers, to mention some prominent examples. *Nicholas Nickleby* contains several wonderful descriptions of the London streets, emphasizing the teeming proliferation of weirdos in the city and in Dickens's head. The novel—and the play—had the impact of a crowded street where we either know or want to know the history of every single person.

The acting was superb, in a certain style. The actors chewed up the scenery but they worked together at it. Catwalks and platforms stretched above and around the stage, so that temporarily idle characters could have a place to watch the action. Hunks of Dickens's prose were declaimed by whole groups, which fleetingly formed a chorus. Whenever the narrative returned to London—as it frequently did—the company gave a unanimous shout and became a busy thoroughfare through which Nicholas could make his way. Nicholas himself—played brilliantly by Roger Rees—was far from the pale wimp he has often seemed to readers. Rees was an imperious, hot-blooded and slightly absurd Nicholas, whose long-winded, melodramatic declamations turned out to be comically exhilarating.

Aside from fine ensemble acting, this production had another major strength going for it. It interwove comedy and melodrama, allowing the one to set off the other. The comic spirit was apotheosized at the end of the first half, when Vincent Crummles's theatrical company—with Nicholas a member—performed its *Romeo and Juliet.* Marvellous show: the Crummles company resurrects everyone but Tybalt, spouting along the way bogus Victorian blank verse. This parody was perfectly in Dickens's spirit (cf. *Great Expectations,* which gives us Wopsle's *Hamlet*), though it happened to have been written by the RSC adapter, David Edgar.

After *Romeo and Juliet,* the production became darker. People have a vague idea that the young Dickens is cheerful—all Pickwickian festivity—the older Dickens gloomy and skeptical. *Nicholas Nickleby* shows the limits of this idea. The comic moments continue in the second half of the RSC production but they are increasingly set off by death and violence. The halfwit Smike has run away from the vicious headmaster Squeers; kidnapped by Squeers he escapes again, then dies in Nicholas's arms. Ralph Nickleby discovers himself to be the dead boy's father; he goes home and hangs himself, in one of the play's most powerful scenes. Against the comedy, then,

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It seems doubtful that anyone who reads *Nicholas Nickleby* after seeing the stage version will fail to hear its multitude of voices or to sense its exuberant pace.

this *Nicholas Nickleby* sets the other side of the novel—which is just as effectively presented. Trevor Nunn resists any temptation to camp up Victorian melodrama. He takes it seriously, as in Dickens's case well he might. There are no Oscar Wilde-style sneers.[1]

The RSC production is unique in neither of the qualities I have singled out. Ensemble acting and the interplay of comedy with melodrama have figured in plenty of Dickensian dramatizations—just not at this length. MGM once trotted out its stable of stars to do *David Copperfield,* with admirable results except that the film seemed all cut up: it leapt from episode to episode, leaving out huge and necessary pieces of the original. *Nicholas Nickleby* was filmed by Alberto Cavalcanti, to much the same effect. This latter film was defended by *The New Yorker* when it appeared in 1947, and defended on the grounds of its brevity (108 minutes). Had the whole book been included, we are told, "we should have had nothing as brisk and entertaining as this film."

The RSC *Nicholas Nickleby* is perhaps the first time the opposite theory has been put into effect. Its lesson is that length can make an all-important difference, not because a movie must be faithful to its source in every detail, but because length, in the case of Dickens, is itself a carrier of meaning. Dickens's novels offer the sustained impression of an inexhaustible world, surprising in its variety and its coincidences. This impression can be hinted at in productions of the smaller books, so it is these that viewers as opposed to readers are familiar with. Even here, however, editing has seldom been for the better. In the film versions of *A Tale of Two Cities* we get Dr. Manette's return from the dead but not the accompanying parody: young Jerry Cruncher's dream of hopping coffins. There is no room in a two-hour film for the amplitude of a medium-sized Dickens novel, much less a book where concision is a faux pas—where, pace *The New Yorker,* the "crowded gallery of characters" must remain crowded.

By and large, directors of both stage and screen productions have bowed to the seemingly inevitable limitations of time. It might have seemed a stroke of idiocy to ignore them; it turned out a stroke of genius. The RSC's innovation was radical in the sense of a return to sources. For the first time a Dickens novel was made to come alive—almost literally. Like all such leaps of imagination, this one transformed its original. I doubt that anyone who reads *Nicholas Nickleby* after seeing the RSC version will fail to hear those choruses, fail to sense the exuberant, restless pace. These things were in Dickens from the beginning but they needed such a marathon dramatization for their presence to be fully appreciated. One's understanding of the Victorian novel as a multitude of voices—voices working together over the long haul—was thus given an aesthetic confirmation.

I have been treating stage and screen versions of Dickens as though they were interchangeable. This is true up to a point: the lesson of the RSC *Nicholas Nickleby* can easily be applied to film, which has much the same capacity for expressive excess. Would anyone actually make a nine-hour film of Dickens? Perhaps not. Many of history's finest films have been mauled precisely because a director needed nine hours and could not get it. Abel Gance's *Napoleon* was reconstructed last year but the forty-two reels of Von Stroheim's *Greed* remain buried somewhere in the MGM vaults. The failure of Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate* has not helped the cause of long films. Nonetheless, visions of a genuine Dickens movie—not all those pale imitations but a full-blooded embodiment—keep working their way through my head. Taking a cue from the RSC, let us imagine for a moment what a film version of Dickens could be.

My ten million dollars in hand—for this will be a medium-sized undertaking, at least by Hollywood's financial standards—I fly to England where casting and set-building for *Bleak House* are already underway. *Bleak House* has at least as many characters as *Nicholas Nickleby*—and so I have recruited some seventy-five excellent British actors, many of them RSC players, a few from the highly Dickensian Monty Python troupe. My one bankable star is Peter O'Toole, who will make a

[1] Wilde said (of *The Old Curiosity Shop*): One must have a heart of stone to read the death of Little Nell without laughing.

No two-hour dramatization: Length is an intrinsic part of any genuine Dickensian film-making.

thirty-second appearance as Nemo, Lady Dedlock's doomed lover. Some of the specifically theatrical tricks of the RSC *Nicholas Nickleby* are unadaptable for my purposes, though I have stolen them where I can. For catwalks and chorus, I substitute the unbeatable storytelling device of a restless, roaming camera—particularly appropriate to *Bleak House,* which alternates between the first-person narrative of Esther Summerson and an "omniscient" narrative. My roaming camera will be aided by unusually ingenious special effects, integrating miniature sets, matte paintings and real-life London locales.[2] That camera really will seem to go anywhere it pleases; pausing in the thoroughfares around Chancery, it will be just as likely to follow one person as another. An apparent randomness will conceal a fiendishly intricate plot, whose many layers will only gradually become evident. Nobody in my audience will get restless; the production will have the same pace as the RSC's, moving us on from scene to scene so that we feel—even when we don't quite understand—the logic of the novel's development.

Last but not least, I will take advantage of modern cinematic sound-systems, with their many overlapping tracks. I will use this technology to render some of my favorite sentences from *Bleak House:* "In these fields of Mr. Tulkinghorn's inhabiting, where the shepherds play on Chancery pipes that have no stop, and keep their sheep in the fold by hook and by crook until they have shorn them exceeding close, every noise is merged, this moonlight night, into a distant ringing hum, as if the city were a vast glass, vibrating." This odd, ironic piece of description refers to the chambers of the villainous lawyer Tulkinghorn, who has blackmailed the aforementioned Lady Dedlock and who will be murdered in a phrase or two by her serving-maid. That vast glass vibrating is the novel as well as the city: a field of forces so varied that it begins to shake a little, to show the first signs of disintegration. No two-hour dramatization would have time for the image and the sound—how literally shall I evoke it?—nor for the overwhelming accumulation of events that lead us here. Length is an intrinsic, not an accidental part of any genuine Dickensian film-making.

Few writers have been more often filmed or staged. Further, Dickens seems as popular now as at any time during the twentieth century. Since the RSC will not (as was facetiously rumored) change its name to the Royal Dickens Company, it is up to someone else to pursue its success. Money for this purpose may be directed to R. Maxwell at Valparaiso University, in lieu of any other takers. I should add, perhaps, the assurance that I am willing to release the film in three parts, and to title the first *Chancery Wars.* Anything for art.

[2] See Harold Schechter and David Everitt, *Film Tricks* (New York: Harlan Quist, 1980), an excellent recent book on special effects.

A Very Real Feeling

It was a very real feeling I felt
coming out the door and here came she
and her friend and they pounded a greeting
into me and all I could do was raise a hand
and went by and put the trash in the trash bin.

Archibald Henderson

Television

Getting Tangled In the Cable

The Technological Revolution in TV

James Combs

Your reviewer has a confession to make. I went on the cable. In some circles, such an admission takes the same nerve, and produces the same embarrassment, as the new AA member announcing that he is an alcoholic. For some people, TV in itself ranks as the most pernicious instrument ever invented by the mind of man (even more so than the telephone), and anybody who drinks in it as deeply as the cable permits has got to be a lush whose brain has been destroyed by the video poison. Worse than that, I bought a video cassette recorder and have been taping things off the tube. If all those channels weren't enough, I can record and replay shows or whatever I especially like. Like the derelict who boozes all the time, my life could become consumed with flipping through all those channels, staring at all those HBO movies, replaying all those tapes until death.

Yet I haven't felt like a lush, and my consumption of tube fare re-

James Combs *writes regularly for* The Cresset *on television and other matters. His latest book is* Polpop: Politics and Popular Culture in America, *which will be published by King's Court later this year.*

Some media watchers note that most of the new cable fare is the same old stuff, originating in the same Hollywood factories that produce material for the networks.

mains moderate by American standards (viewing hours per person in 1979 was 3.9 hours a day, and the set in the 99 per cent of households that have TVs is on over seven hours a day). My brain functions as badly as always. And rather than being turned into a zombie, I have been rather exhilarated—certainly fascinated—by this new toy. Anyone interested in mass media and the impact of technological change has to understand the possibilities of the cable and the VCR, for they are enormous and unforeseen. Playing with this new toy gives me the feeling indeed that I have hooked onto one of the major technological innovations of our century, an awesome thing with quite incalculable consequences. It is not quite like being present when the first page came off of Gutenberg's press, or when the first crystal sets picked up KDKA in Pittsburgh, but it's close.

For openers, the cable and the VCR are a film buff's dream. If you consume movies, practically everything from *Citizen Kane* to *The Sensuous Nurses* appears at one time or another on one of the cable channels (the number varies from place to place: Columbus, Ohio has sixty channels). The movie channels—HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, etc.—run movies practically around the clock. The VCRs have spawned a highly competitive business (including pirating) of movies available in cassette. You can now buy (or rent) your favorite movies and play them at your leisure. Or you can tape movies off the air onto tape and keep them to replay. Even though some movies are better seen on the big screen (e.g., *2001*), this new development is the ultimate for the movie freak (or in my case, both freak and student) in convenience and availability. And you can rationalize it all easily enough—there are simply a lot of movies that you would go out and pay more money to see at a theater than you pay in your monthly cable fee.

Media watchers, however, are more interested in the possibilities and the eventual composition of cable TV. Some are exultant, seeing the demise of banal massified TV fare, and the rise of a virtually inexhaustible array of choices across the gamut of channels that will eventually be available. The networks used to be able to dominate viewing simply because of their technological oligopoly: no one else had the capacity to reach, through affiliates, the great bulk of American viewers. But cable, satellites, and ambitious newcomers such as Ted Turner changed all that. The satellites began to demonstrate that highly specialized programming could be targeted at specific audiences at low cost, and the entertainment industry has been thrown into turmoil. Channels directed at Hispanics, blacks, women, Christians, children, sports fans, and so on without apparent end "narrowcast" to these audiences.

Americans have always adopted technological innovations carelessly, without thinking much about their long-term or unknown consequences.

Telecommunication giants, reasoning that if you can't lick 'em, join 'em, have jumped into the fray, announcing expensive and ambitious plans for cable nets and the like. It is probable in the long run that the corporate giants will come to dominate much of this burgeoning industry—Time, Inc., ABC-Westinghouse, RCA-NBC, Warner Communications, and even staid old CBS. We are, after all, talking about the future of video and thus Big Bucks. In a recent bidding war, Home Box Office outbid its competitors for the right to broadcast the road show version of *Camelot* for $1,250,000. The networks, rightly anxious, are expressing fears that someday events such as the Super Bowl and the Academy Awards will be on cable nets. That is a long way off, but everybody realizes the potential: strikes in Hollywood now among writers, directors, and actors involve the issue of a piece of this new action.

Other media watchers are less sanguine about the benefits of the new video. They note that most of the new fare is the same old stuff, originating in the same Hollywood media factories that produce material for the commercial networks. Studies indicate that the people who were, and are, the habitual watchers of the commercial nets are the same people who buy cable and watch that. Cable has not brought new viewers into the wonderful world of video, partly because the stuff they disliked on commercial TV is the same pabulum of the cable channels. There are, for example, few "serious" or highfalutin films on the movie channels. Burt Reynolds is now omnipresent because of the advent of cable movies. The only programming innovations of note are blue movies, raw humor, and uncensored sex and violence. (Moralists are hard at work trying to censor such fare, but are at something of a disadvantage, since cable is not "public" but subscribed, and the companies can argue that they are not "forcing" anyone to watch.) In any case, even the cable executives agree that so far the availability of new channels has not meant more diversity or quality.

What cable augurs, then, remains to be seen. Americans have always adopted technological innovations carelessly, without much thought to the long-term and unanticipated consequences of their new toys. J. Robert Oppenheimer once said of the hydrogen bomb that "it was technologically feasible—we had to do it." It is no secret that we admire inventors, people skilled at some-

Cable television augurs another quantum leap in the availability of entertainment and thus feeds people's intense desire to escape the boredom and drudgery of work.

thing, and good "technique" in general. Our "technological psychosis" is such that we will put up with almost any inconvenience because "that's progress." Some reflect nowadays that progress isn't as progressive as it looks. As Jacques Ellul argued, technique tends to be irreversible, taking on a power and "logic" of its own by the proliferation of its use. That such "rationalization"—to borrow Max Weber's term—can be ironically irrational in its consequences is clear enough. The proliferation of creature comforts and household gadgets requires the expansion of energy sources and availability, spurring the wider search for and introduction of new technology with greater problems. The electric can opener is not unrelated to strip mining and nuclear power plants. The automobile is not unrelated to the growth of tract housing in suburbs and to the sexual revolution. Powerful electronic tuners and speaker systems are not unrelated to decline in hearing ability and conversation. (If your children seem inarticulate, it is partly because they can't talk to their peers over the music they play, which drowns out talk, and probably thought!)

Television has always been one of the ultimate symbols of the evils of technology, something that allegedly anesthetizes the brain and obliterates the "real world." For many critics, the cable will not create an oasis in the TV wasteland; it will only expand the desert. Cable's defenders, as we have seen, think it will offer a diversity of taste and interest for a pluralistic society. Others think it will simply expand the unimaginative and uncultured production values that the commercial networks have already pioneered. Cable, they say, will simply give us more opportunity to sit there transfixed by an endless variety of sameness. The Christian channels and shows illustrate this. Even though they represent a distinct subculture with a clear set of values and agenda, nevertheless they dutifully obey the canons and formats of television tradition—talk shows, news, even soap operas. One may wonder whether such massified broadcasting creates a distinguishable community or simply extends media conditioning to another part of the mass audience.

The technological expansion of TV fare suggests something else that could be quite consequential. It has always been assumed that rational man would balance work and play, and that society and economy could count on *homo faber* to expand the energy to keep the engine of society going. Yet if one watches people at shopping centers, ballparks, rock concerts, or at home, it becomes easy to entertain the notion that people above all want pleasure—endlessly. Consumption is pleasure, eating and drinking are pleasure, entertainment is pleasure. Given the chance, most people probably would not work at all. If that argument is correct, then this media innovation offers a new outlet for that boundless pleasure principle: if people's desire for pleasure expands by the stimuli available to please them, then the cable is a great new way to be pleased. One can imagine a family which spends all its time consuming—visiting theme parks, franchise food outlets, and shopping centers when out, and playing video games or watching endless movies-on-TV while at home. Such a family would be the perfect consumer unit, the ultimate vehicle to keep the consumer economy going.

But the expansion of the pleasure principle is logically accompanied by the diminution of the work principle. To the extent that entertainment and other consumer opportunities are available, the willingness and simply the time to work are reduced. Cable TV augurs for your reviewer another quantum leap in the availability of entertainment, and thus in people's desire to escape the boredom and drudgery of work. If it is true that there is a sort of Parkinson's Law of entertainment, then the boundless desire for entertainment being met means not only the expansion of the entertainment industry but also the devotion of more time to consuming it. Such a social trend would bode ill for the energy necessary to maintain and expand the very economy that feeds

the demand for consumption.

There is much talk nowadays about the need to increase productivity. Supply-side economics cannot work unless workers—including white-collar workers and executives—become more productive. The dilemma is that the kind of increased productivity that feeds increased consumption of, for example, media products decreases the time and energy available for increasing general productivity. How many people are willing to work overtime, or for that matter work harder, when their time and energy are focused on after-work entertainment? For the worker it may be bowling, beer, and baseball; for the executive, golf, martinis, and a show; for both, the increased volume and choice of entertainment at home that cable TV brings. In any case, the machines and the paperwork don't move during the leisure hours.

We may leave the dilemmas of such an economy to the economists and politicians. Perhaps they will work overtime, eschewing the pleasures of a leisure society, to solve the problem. We may suspect they will have to. Americans are now so committed to entertainment that Lewis Lapham, one of our more acute observers, has dubbed America a "leisure state," a society of post-industrial nomads all in mad pursuit of the pleasure principle. Political talk about restoring the work ethic and productivity may fail simply because everyone is out consuming, or, if home, has tuned out the politicians to watch cable TV. Even if people do tune in, it may not make any difference: a morality of play beats a morality of work any day in the week. We may have made pleasure so attractive and so available that the traditional work ethic truly is threatened. If so, and if, as Ellul suggests, the effects of technological innovation are irreversible, then the future patterns of our economy and our social morality will be quite unlike anything we have experienced in the past. It will be a fascinating thing to watch.

The Nation

A Message For the Church

Jesse Jackson Calls For Prophetic Witness

Karl E. Lutze

It sometimes takes outsiders to help God's people get new perspectives and gain new understandings of His purposes. That was already the case in Old Testament times, and though there were leaders and teachers in the congregation God sent in "outsiders." He called them "prophets."

The Lutheran Council, USA, in May of this year called for a prophetic voice to address the National Assembly on Lutheran Social Ministry. After a member of the President's cabinet explained and defended at length the administration's budgetary plans and a Lutheran congressman critiqued those plans, a black Baptist preacher named Jesse Jackson spoke.

Dr. Jackson's message in essence: The church must be faithful to its Lord—"we must still sing the Lord's song in a strange land!"

For a day when for many people the definition of justice has narrowed to mean little more than vindictive treatment of criminals on the one hand and the right of achievers to acquire and keep on the other, the speaker returned to basics. "Government of the governed must be responsive to the needs of the people governed." And his word to the church: "Don't relieve government of that profound responsibility!"

In a day when food stamps are limited, educational help for children of lower income families reduced, housing for the needy out of reach, and security for the aging threatened, Jackson insisted, "it remains the charge of the church to be the defender of poor people."

How? "Keep educating people to see what the plight of the poor is." Church people must not forget the truly needy while hearing the repeated refrain that "we've gotta crack down on welfare cheats." And he added, "don't let your congregations get herded into an economic panic . . . that would allow them to put culture above Christ and flag above cross."

In the discussion period that followed Dr. Jackson's address, someone asked, "Don't you think that what appears to be a dark cloud can prove to be a blessing in disguise? Could not this present situation rekindle some of the social consciousness and action which we saw in the church a few years ago, so that the church may take a more active role in caring for the poor?"

Indicting neglect and abandoning of the poor and needy as Satanic, the speaker retorted: "The church should not consider it a blessing in disguise to be motivated by what is evil; we should be motivated by God's will."

Many poor and troubled people in many places have their Good Fridays. What makes our response to these Good Fridays different, he explained, is that our Christ has imbued us with the living, life-giving spirit of the Resurrection faith. "Don't," he warned, "be mere wearers of the cross, but bearers of the cross. . . .

"And as you speak out as defender of the poor in the Spirit of Christ—don't let anyone dilute your spirit; don't let them break your spirit."

Once again a prophet has spoken. And the words of the Lord are appropriate, "He who has ears to hear . . ."

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Books

Borodin: Stalin's Man in China

By Dan N. Jacobs. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981. Pp. 369. Cloth, $25.00.

Valparaiso University's most historically important alumnus, Mikhail Borodin, served in the 1920s as Communist agent in China, Mexico, England, Spain, and Germany. Jacobs' informative biography details the career of the emigré Russian Jew who attended Valparaiso in 1908 and early 1909 (taking courses in typing, rhetoric, elocution, and shorthand). After leaving Valparaiso (where "time seemed scarcely to move"), Borodin established a school in the Russian Jewish section of Chicago, which he operated until 1918 on the Valparaiso open school model: "easy admission [and] inexpensive tuition, [with] courses designed to meet the practical needs of its students."

Jacobs, of course, does not dwell on Borodin's Valparaiso experience, short as it was. As the subtitle indicates, China is the central focus; after his return to Russia in 1918, it was in China that Borodin made his outstanding contribution: restructuring the Nationalist Party of Sun Yat-sen (and later Chiang Kai-shek) and organizing the Nationalist army which would reunite China, though eventually lose to the Communists. Jacobs' description of the collaboration between Borodin and Sun in the turbulence of revolutionary Canton is, I think, the most interesting part of the book: Sun, warily accepting advice and aid from the Communist International to build a party and army to overcome China's warlords and expel imperialist powers; Borodin, using his political acumen to persuade and pressure Sun on various points in the process of establishing a party on the Leninist model and an army in the Soviet mold. This relationship could have been probed more extensively if Jacobs had used Chinese sources, but he did not. The Chinese perspective is thus often absent or seen only indistinctly.

Jacobs is at his story-telling best in his description of the collapse of Borodin's (and the Comintern's) efforts to be in the vanguard of the Chinese revolution: the intra-party confusion and feuding following Sun's death in 1925, the rise of Chiang Kai-shek as his successor, and the gradual split between Chiang and his Russian advisors. In April 1927, Chiang effectively ended the collaboration by bloodily smashing union workers and leftists who had helped him seize Shanghai on his Northern Expedition. By the end of the summer, Borodin, Soviet advisors, and Chinese hangers-on were headed to Moscow, the victims of Stalin's persisting in a failed policy and of the unpredictability of the Chinese revolution. Borodin became one of Stalin's scapegoats, spending most of the rest of his life editing an English-language newspaper in Moscow. In 1951, the man who had studied at Valparaiso died in a Siberian concentration camp, the victim of Stalin's paranoia and anti-Semitism. There is no new interpretative material on the Chinese revolution here, but the picture of Borodin comes through more clearly than in any other work describing the period.

Indeed, it dominates the work. Perhaps it is unfair to fault Jacobs here: after all, this is a biography entitled simply *Borodin*; but I think he has fallen into the trap of many biographers: exaggerating the importance of his subject. On page 1, Borodin is described as "the Bolshevik conqueror of half of China." [!] Later Jacobs, briefly reining in his hyperbolic prose, cautions that "care must be taken not to overstate the role of Borodin in China." Yet only one paragraph later, seemingly oblivious to his own warning, he asserts that "step by step, Borodin built *his* revolution" [italics mine]. This tendency to overestimate Borodin's admittedly important role is exacerbated by the already-mentioned absence of Chinese sources.

For all the described domination of events by Borodin, as an individual he seems a rather shadowy figure. I am not certain Jacobs understands him well; this is likely, however, not Jacobs' fault. The nature of Borodin's work itself would seem to suggest that abundant sources which might reveal the man more clearly do not exist. In addition, Borodin never liked to talk about himself. When the interviewing American journalist Anna Louise Strong wanted to know about his life, he replied, "I was born in the snow . . . and I live in the sun—yes? What good are facts?" Jacobs acknowledges the mysteries and uncertainties surrounding many of Borodin's activities.

After Valparaiso University, Borodin went on to even greater things as Stalin's man in China during the revolutionary 1920s.

It may be partially the lack of data on Borodin and his actions that led Jacobs into techniques that I, as a professional historian, find distasteful: ascribing to Borodin certain thoughts and attitudes which the author has not documented and cannot document (indeed, the book is very sparsely footnoted). As an example, the following from his Valparaiso experience:

> The main line of the Chicago Northern went directly through the campus, and many a night Borodin must have heard the whistle of the evening expresses going west to Chicago, east to Cleveland, and probably wished he was aboard—and wondered what he was doing in Valparaiso.

There may be students who have had similar thoughts [!], but Jacobs

cannot know that Borodin did. Or, again (with no documentation), "Borodin had serious doubts about his and China's future."

It is only a short step from such unbased ascriptions to editorial insertions which detract from the book's scholarly quality. In speaking of the relationship of Borodin and his wife Fanya, Jacobs asserts that "considering Fanya's appearance—big, square, with an axlike face—one might wonder if he had wanted to run away."

On the whole, the monograph has an informal almost novelistic air that, I suspect, the author hoped would assure a paperback edition. For the specialist, it is thus disappointing. For those who have little background in this fascinating period, however, the book is worth reading; it is informative and it tells an intriguing and important story.

R. Keith Schoppa

The Outward Bound

***Caravaning as the Style of the Church.* By Vernard Eller. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 104. Paper.**

In this book, Vernard Eller somewhat resembles our Lord.

He enters churchly precincts with reverence and zeal for the Father's house/business, but he bumps tables and knocks other installations of the management that in his judgment obscure and distort the message of the Gospel and the coming of God's Kingdom.

An ordained minister of the Church of the Brethren, the author laments that congregations today seem largely to have lost sight of the New Testament model set for them and have chosen what he calls a "commissary" model rather than a "caravan" model. His distinction: "commisary is an institution commissioned to dispense particular goods, services, or benefits to a select constituency" (even though some may not avail themselves of privileges offered); "caravan is a group of people seeking a common destination (a community rather than an institution) . . . following the Lord on His way toward the Kingdom." Eller, of course, strikes at attempts to administer the activities of congregations which minimize or eliminate possibilities for members to function as members-together of the Body of Christ.

The author has little patience with the proponents of "church growth" programs, insisting that they stress success at the expense of fidelity and call for calculation rather than faith. He sees the system rejoicing in accessions and numerical growth rather than in risk, sacrifice, venturing, and ultimately dying for Christ. Dying for Christ, he says, would hardly be reckoned as success by church growth criteria.

He goes on to argue that the church growth movement is essentially concerned with sharp sociological calculations regarding "organization, management, marketing, advertising, public relations . . . and all of it directed precisely at working the angles, figuring the odds, and minimizing the risks so as to ensure the church's institutional success."

But Eller interjects a qualifier in his critique, noting that he is eager not "to deny the legitimacy of any and all efforts at church growth." The church is necessarily an institution and concern for its well-being is appropriate. However, he sees the key to dealing with the issue in Christ's statement: "Seek first the Kingdom; the rest will come as well."

Eller notes that church growth proponents categorize as "terminally ill" congregations in which sociological factors are so aligned that no techniques can be calculated to turn the situation around and bring them growth. Recalling characterizations of the Seven Churches in Scripture's final book, Eller argues that the Smyrna and Philadelphia Churches could then be labeled as "terminally ill," while Jesus accords them high commendation. He asks, "do we really want to be . . . diagnosing as ill what Christ diagnoses as well?" He does not dispute church growth's sociological judgment. He is, however, "distressed at the evaluational implications that attend it." The author also suggests that the Laodicea Church might have scored high in church growth ratings, but that it hardly received good grades from the Lord of the Church.

Alluding to Kirkegaard's insight, in which he claimed that in selecting and examining at random any member (microcosm) one could learn all that is essential about the congregation (macrocosm), Eller extends the argument. "Catch the first congregation that comes your way (microcosm) and, at least in theory, you could discover the nature of the coming of the Kingdom of God (macrocosm)." And of course he wonders if most congregations could begin to measure up to such exposure.

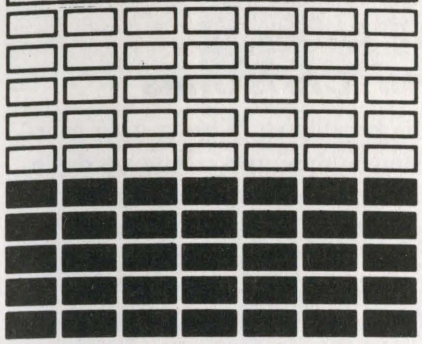
The Church is an institution and concern for its well-being is appropriate, but Christ said, "Seek first the Kingdom; the rest will come as well."

He pleads then for a renewal by which a congregation will evoke an appropriate "caravan" style in its members, who in turn will effect a caravan style in the congregation they form and constitute. Ultimately Eller calls for a commitment to Christian simplicity, emphasizing the adjective "Christian," so that fidelity becomes the hallmark of the style.

Far from suggesting that "faithfulness" is mere waiting on the Lord, Eller calls for total discipleship, a discipleship which in the end hears Christ's commendation, but not on the basis of one's achievements and accomplishments. As Eller clearly notes, Christ has called for *fidelity*, and whatever is added is *His* accomplishment.

Karl E. Lutze

Campus Diary



Christianity in our time often—and falsely—promises exemption or escape from suffering.

All Saints Day, 1981

John Strietelmeier

Siddhartha Gautama was the son of a Nepalese chieftain of the warrior caste. Born to wealth and high status, he developed a sensitivity to the misery and poverty which he saw all around him. First in Hinduism and later in Jainism he looked for an explanation of the problem of human suffering. Finally, at age 35, after a period of solitary meditation, he found the answers to his questions. He was known thereafter as the Buddha, the Enlightened One.

Basic to the Buddha's teaching are the "Four Noble Truths," the first of which is that suffering is universal. That is to say, suffering is not some exception to a natural order of happiness and pleasure. It is of the essence of the human condition. To be human is to suffer.

Gautama had to discover for himself, through many years of searching and questioning, a truth which for Christians was once axiomatic but which, in our day, is almost universally denied.

The classic statement of the problem of suffering in the Judaeo-Christian tradition is, of course, the Book of Job. Here was a man who had everything that a man could want until God allowed Satan to strike him in his person and his property. Accused by friends and racked by doubt, Job nevertheless keeps the faith ("Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him") and in the end gets it all back, "twice as much as he had before."

As a literary work and as an affirmation of faith, Job is a masterpiece. But it strains not only credulity but faith to explain human suffering as a consequence of a good-natured wager between God and Satan on how a good man will bear up under adversity. And, of course, we can find no comfort in comparing ourselves as burden bearers with the heroic figure of Job. Most of us, I suspect, read the story of Job as a counsel of perfection. From that it is only one short step to assuming that the way of suffering is a discipline which God imposes upon the spiritual elite and therefore an inappropriate demand on us ordinary folk who have no aspirations to sainthood.

The New Testament is matter-of-fact about suffering. Jesus tells His disciples flatly: "In the world you shall have tribulation." St. Paul comprehends all of history and geography in the statement: "The whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now." St. Peter assures the exiles of the Dispersion that God will restore, establish, and strengthen them "after you have suffered a little while." Indeed the Gospel itself is the story of God's taking upon Himself the whole burden of human suffering and death.

In the light of all this, it seems strange that Christianity in our time should have been so largely debased to the level of a happiness cult, promising exemption or escape from suffering. In the first place, it is patently untrue that Christians get off without suffering. But even if it were true, how could any imitator of Christ be unmoved and unhurt by the sufferings of friends and neighbors and those about whom we know little except that they are in pain?

Contemporary hymn-book editors seem to feel that our parents and grandparents were too inclined to brood on the sorrows and afflictions of this life and did not take seriously enough the new state of affairs that came into being when "Joy dawned again on Easter Day." And indeed when one re-reads some of the old hymns with their endless bewailing of the human condition one wonders whether the writers had ever heard of the Resurrection. But even if it was overdone, the note of restlessness, of weariness, of yearning is an honest and legitimate expression of the human spirit. Pop psychology to the contrary notwithstanding, one does not have to be mentally ill to feel tired or discouraged or lonely or burdened. One need only be human.

And it is in our humanness, not in our pretensions to divinity, that the Church has been called to minister to us. Canon Twells knew his people when he invited them to sing with him in his great evening hymn: "Some are sick, and some are sad, and some have never loved Thee well, and some have lost the love they had." That's the sort of people we actually are out there in the pews. But the only reason why most of us are there at all is that, like Luther, we are hoping to find a gracious God.

All Saints Day reminds us every year that the Church, the Communion of Saints, remains. It is the glory of that Church that there are still so many gatherings of Christian people among whom He may be found. In these gatherings one can still experience the consolation and encouragement of the brethren. And in the process one learns all over again the truth of those words of Dean Inge: "It is becoming impossible for those who mix with their fellowmen to believe that the grace of God is distributed denominationally."

For Good Reading
In a Glad New Year

In Time— For Christmas

The herald angels' song is an everlasting antiphony . . . It moves down the centuries above, beneath, and in the earth from Christmas to Christmas to Christmas . . . In it alone is hope before death and after death . . . Their song lives to the 2,000th Christmas, to the 3,000th, and at length to the last Christmas the world will see . . . And on that final Christmas, as on the first, the angels will know, as we must know now, that the heart which began to beat in Bethlehem still beats in the world and for the world . . . And for us . . .

O. P. Kretzmann
The Pilgrim

Many years will pass before you understand Christmas . . . In fact, you will never understand it completely . . . But you can always believe in it, always . . . The Child has come to keep us company . . . To tell us that heaven is nearer than we had dared to think . . . To put the hope of eternity in our eyes . . . To tell us that the manger is never empty for those who return to it . . . And you will find with Him, I know, a happiness which you will never find alone . . .

O. P. Kretzmann
Christmas Garlands

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